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Ups and Downs

—OF AN—

ILL-SPENT LIFE

By Harry Watkins.

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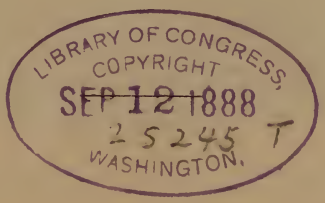

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HARRY WATKINS.

DEDICATION.

To the three nearest related to me in a far away land, from whom the vicissitudes of misfortune have seperated me, perhaps, never to meet again, this little book is dedicated as a token of memory from the sad heart of the AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

This is an unpretentious little volume written in a hundred hours—in intervals snatched from dissipation. It is only the brief story of a wrecked and ruined life. My object is to deter others from following in the foot-steps that have been so fatal to me.

Against the advice and consent of friends and relatives, and without the advantages of a school education, or library, I submit it to your sympathetic consideration; claiming an honor not yet conferred upon man; an honor that will not only perpetuate my name, but write it in fame high on the monument of time; namely, that I am the only individual in the world's history who wrote his own biography without being repeatedly requested to do so, and was not closely related either by consanguinity or affinity to Geo. Washington, Pocahontas, or some other great man.

NOTES.

A feeling is prevalent among various Denominations against irony, sarcasm, satire and slang. This is a fanatical spirit, placing the merits of an author in a channel too small for the promulgation of feeling.

Irony is a mode of speech, in which the meaning is contrary to the words, and is usually extravagant. Sarcasm and satire are synonomous terms and most generally are employed to censure vices and follies; with the object of reformation it partakes of wit or humor, and presents the style of originality. These are peculiar gifts with which few are endowed.

Gibbon and other historians claimed Jesus of Nazareth the wittiest man of the age. It is true Gibbon was a little skeptical, a fault we can not condone. With all his faults however, we must credit him with fairness as an historiographer, for indeed the sarcasm and satire of our Saviour accomplished a revolution in the religious world.

The moral lessons as taught by Cicero were too

austere in texture and sublime in speculation for actual use; he knew nothing of sarcasm, satire or wit; his forte was irony, eloquence, and madness. Our Saviour taught a sympathy for the fallen, the miserable, the guilty, the wretched; frequently using sarcasm and satire to fight sin. The Pharisee must have felt small, when he pointed him out as standing afar off and thanking the Lord that he was not like other men. In His own original, sarcastic style he told how hard it was for a rich man to "enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The writer of this confession claims none of the honors of a polished scholar, but verily believes in his own rough manner he can reach to reformation a class discarded by the world. And to that aim this little book is written. Be not so uncharitable as to discredit the author's sincerity on account of his slangy indulgences. Having lived so long with the wretched, slang became a language. Victor Hugo said, "slang is the language of misery." Here we may, perhaps, be stopped. The fact may be generalized, which is sometimes a way alternating; it may be observed that every trade, every profession, all the accidents of social hierarchy, and all the forms of intelligence have their slang.

"The classic academican who calls flowers Flora, the sea Neptune, love the Flames, a horse a charger has his slang." For the necessities of

struggle misery has invented a fighting language called slang. Slang, whether people allow it or not, has its syntax and poetry and is a language. The author spoke it fifteen years and can not resist it now.

CHAPTER I.

BORN OF CHRISTIAN PARENTS—WORK IN THE COTTON FIELD—PURCHASE RED EYE FROM COUNTRY GROCERY—BROTHER AND I GET DRUNK IN A CAVE—THE LOST BOYS—THE NEIGHBORHOOD ALARMED—ARRIVE HOME SICK—TELL A WONDERFUL STORY—DOCTOR AND OLD WOMEN BELIEVE IT—WHAT THE COUNTY PAPER SAID—ADVICE TO YOUTH.

An honest confession is good for the soul; and truth, stranger than fiction. As it is now plain to me that I have made a miserable failure in all I have undertaken, I have determined to write a short biographical sketch of my own life; and if its dismal details serve as a warning to one poor soul at least, I will have my proper reward. And truly do I trust that those who follow me through these pages may do so with charity. In nothing will I vaunt myself—Heaven knows I cannot—in nothing will I spare myself.

I was born of Christian parents, in moderate circumstances, near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. From earliest recollection I drank all the whisky

I could get, but never was what one might call drunk, until my twelfth year.

One hot midsummer day I was assisting my brother—my older brother John—to hoe the cotton. The sun sent its great, broad rays in focused heat fiercely upon our heads. Like other honest farmers, we were earning our bread, as God in the primeval days commanded, "by the sweat of our brows." The heat was so intense that we concluded to have a "cooler." My brother gave me two dollars, and, while I went to a country grocery and invested in two quarts of "red eye," he gathered the mint and had the sugar ready for a julep. A great cave was on our farm, through which ran a spring of pure, cold water; and there we retired for the grand jubilee. We made and drank mint juleps as long as we could see each other, and then took it straight out of the bottle. We repeated poetry, embraced in a maudlin fashion, drank whisky, and fought each other there from ten in the morning until dark. Then we concluded to go home, but were too drunk to navigate, and could not get out of the cave. We made repeated efforts to reach the top, but rolled back, deathly sick. It was awful dark down there, and we threw up all over each other. We cursed and prayed to get out, but there we lay as limber as dishrags. The neighborhood turned out with lanterns to look for us, but no one thought of the cave, and there

we lay in drunken misery until the dawn of day. When we made the riffle and went home, we found the family weeping for the lost boys. We told them we had eaten blackberries and the locust eggs on the blackberries had nearly killed us. My mother put me to bed and sent a nigger flying after a doctor. The old ladies for miles around came to talk the matter over, and recommended sage and saffron tea. The doctor arrived, wisely looked through his spectacles at my tongue and said, "locust eggs." They pumped my stomach, scraped my tongue, and then the doctor and old women analyzed the locust eggs. I could smell the whisky and mint when I would throw up, but they never dropped. I could hear my brother groan in an adjoining room, but I could not help him, as I had to look out for No. 1. Notwithstanding the fine blackberry crop, not a berry was gathered in the neighborhood, and I read in the county paper how the skillful physician saved Joe Watkins' boys when poisoned with locust eggs.

As is customary, but to my surprise, I recovered from this little spree, which was the beginning of a drunken life. It is in after chapters that you will see the horrors that befell me in manhood. O, youth! I would say to you all: Don't drink to be like a man, for it is not manly. Touch not the accursed stuff in which devils riot. It will shorten your days, dethrone your reason, enervate you,

deprive you not alone of the joys of this life, but cast you forth from the indescribable glories of that Heaven which God, through Christ, has promised. Happiness in this life—even your immortal soul, you imperil for a cup whose dregs, even as you drink it, are bitter, most bitter.

CHAPTER II.

FAMILY REVERSES—AMBITIOUS TO TRAVEL—LEAVE HOME AT THIRTEEN—EN ROUTE FOR TEXAS—ACROSS THE GULF WITHOUT MONEY—RIDE ON THE BUMPER OF A FREIGHT—COLD AND HUNGRY—KINDNESS AT WAXAHATCHIE—ATTEND BALLS AND THEATRES—THE LASSES—TRAVEL AS FRUIT TREE AGENT — CORRESPOND WITH MY SWEETHEART—DRIVE PONIES TO TENNESSEE—MY SILLY BRAVERY—RIDICULOUS APPEARANCE—BASHFULNESS—MEET MY SWEETHEART— HOME AND RECEPTION — PA'S CLOTHES.

My father, in his old age, met with financial reverses; lost all of his property in speculations, and was not able to send me to school. This proved a heavy blow upon our family, especially upon my father, coming, as it did, in the evening of his life. It is natural for every boy to think his father the best. You have heard little boys say: "My pa can whip your pa." I will only add that my father was too liberal for his own good—he did for me all he was able to do—so it became

necessary for me to support myself. At the tender age of thirteen, with the rose of youth upon my cheek, my young heart full of energy, I became ambitious to seek a fortune in Texas. Fond hope led me into enchanting regions of fancy, where the young mind loves to wander. I had heard and read romantic stories of that sunny land, where innocence was equity and talent was triumph. I had been told of the high, green hills of Texas; of her smiling valleys, boundless plains, and sweet-scented flowers; of the mustang ponies and the cattle upon a thousand hills. My heart leaped within me, as I thus pictured this weird, wild land of the west. So I intimated to my good old parents that I must try the realities of a hidden future in some other clime.

I have read in dime novels how the family gathered around the hearthstone, talked and wept; arranged his wearing apparel, and placed in his Saratoga trunk all the photographs and the little Bible, the night before Johnny left for college. How the neighbors came in to bid him a sad farewell, and how the folks fell on his neck and wept at the depot, and the last word was, "Good-by, my boy; be good." But we didn't have any of that at our house. Oh, no! the neighbors didn't come; only my parents were there to bid me a tender farewell. I sold my pet horse to my brother, and walked to the depot. Certain boys, noticing a

bundle in a red handkerchief (my clothing) which I carried, inquired, "Which way?" I answered carelessly, "Down the road." Thus I launched out, a lad of thirteen, into the broad ocean of humanity.

At the depot I fell in with several gentlemen, also going to Texas, to one of whom I loaned all my money. In consequence I had to *beat* my way from New Orleans to Galveston. There I spent twenty-four hours without anything to eat. The photograph of a fried chicken would have tickled me. From Galveston to Ennis (several hundred miles) I "bilked" my way on the bumper of a freight train. It was a bleak night in December when I stood on the streets of Ennis, cold and hungry. Imagine it. I can remember, still, how brightly the moon shone, how cold and clear the sky. How I wandered, a friendless little boy, heartsick, as well as hungry, remembering the home I had left. How I heard the supper bells ring, but couldn't go. Finally I persuaded a stage-driver to "bum" me to Waxahachie, where I got breakfast—the first meal in two days. An old friend of my father met me and gave me what money I needed, treating me with such kindness that its recollection will linger with me always.

Fortune seemed to have turned favorable. I was introduced to many fair little lasses; escorted them to all the balls and theaters, and learned to

drink fifteen glasses of beer a day and stay on my heels. No doubt, those innocent little girls are matrons now; be that as it will, I love them yet.

Purchasing a pony, my first venture in business was traveling as a fruit tree agent from house to house. With only three dollars left, this business was pursued. Many good old farmers took a fancy for me on account of my youth, and never charged me for lodging. It was hard work and a rough life, but I was happy and contented, which is a jewel.

From earliest recollection I have been bashful in the presence of ladies, and would be very shy and make many blunders when I met them. Afar back in Tennessee, the land of my nativity, there lived a black-eyed maiden, who was my first love. She was the sweet idol of my lonely heart. I corresponded with her, representing that I was in the city, leading a high life; when, in reality, I was in the country "roughing it." In my vivid fancy I was to accumulate a fortune, go home and take her for my bride, and then we would fly to sunny Italy, where we would sing and dance and dream beneath the soft cerulean skies. But it didn't turn out that way. Several stockmen placed the utmost confidence in me, and sold me a lot of horses, to be paid for when I delivered my trees. I drove them through the country, from Cleburne, Texas, to Memphis. It rained incessantly for two months,

during which time I did not sleep in a house or change my clothing. From Memphis I shipped my ponies to Belle Buckle, Tennessee, and I never will forget the morning we arrived there so close to my old Southern home. When the ponies were safely corralled in the stockpens, the people from all around gathered to see the Texas curiosities. Every one knows that a Texas pony will pitch, but, to display my silly bravery to the wondering people, I would ride until my nose bled. My supply of clothing was indeed scanty. My hair was long and sticking out of the top of my hat; my pants were worn completely out behind. I had a high-heeled boot on one foot, and a low-quartered shoe on the other. As I had no coat to hide the rents in my pantaloons, I went to a store and purchased a long, seventy-five-cent duster. Then I returned to the stockpens. While trying to nail up a pair of draw-bars, I suddenly felt hot air under my arms, and, when I looked around, a hungry horse had my duster in his month. I jerked away from him and tore the tail entirely off. With only the sleeves and collar left me, of course I was mortified. I looked like a comic picture in the almanac, and when I started up town again, I met the same young lady with whom I had been corresponding, concerning my high life in Texas. And there I saw love's dream vanish away. She gave me a distant bow, and I stumbled and fell

down. I cannot describe my feelings. I ran off, and as I turned the corner at the rate of a mile a minute, I heard people laughing.

It was only ten miles to my father's house, and I saddled a pony and started. I have read of the return of the prodigal son—how they killed the fatted calf, put the ring on his finger, dressed him in the finest robe, and called in the neighbors to rejoice over the boy that was lost, but now found. But we didn't have a great deal of that at our house. They thought it was my fun, and would not let me come in. Cholera was raging in the country, and they were afraid I had brought it. I finally persuaded them that I was not playing, and was allowed to take a seat on the front piazza. Then they all looked at me and said: "*This is Texas.*" I had no change of clothing, but ma said I could wear pa's clothes until I could do better. Pa weighed two hundred and forty pounds, and I weighed eighty-two, but it was the last chance. Pa wore a beegum hat, and old style, flap pants in front, large enough for three kids like me, but it was the best I could do. Then, on account of cholera, they were afraid to make this grand change in the house, and I had to go out in the apple orchard to dress. Pa wore No. 10 boots and I wore 4's, but it was better than no boots at all. Notwithstanding I was pa's son and had on pa's clothes, I didn't look much like pa. I looked

like a scarecrow. A little negro baby looked at me and went into spasms. The next day they sent me to Murfreesboro to buy clothes to fit me. I put all the rags and pillows in pa's pants to fill them up, but people laughed when I got aboard the train.

CHAPTER III.

ATTEND NASHVILLE EXPOSITION—RETURN TO TEXAS — CLERK — MONEY AND FRIENDS — A SOCIAL DRINKER — CONTINUE TO ACCUMULATE — IN THE POWER OF RUM — FAIL IN BUSINESS — ATTEMPT SUICIDE—THE HORRORS—FRUIT TREE AGENT AGAIN —VISIT THE WILD WEST—DIDN'T ROB THE TRAIN —EXPERIENCE IN BELLE PLAINS.

I disposed of my ponies and spent the entire summer at home. Nothing of consequence happened, and I attended the picnics—even the Nashville Exposition—in my suit purchased on time at Murfreesboro. I returned in the fall with my trees to Texas, where I realized, in various speculations, several thousand dollars. To learn business, I clerked a few months for S. Fields, in Gatesville, whom I may say was one of those few men upon whom God seemed to have set his seal of nobility. It is only too recent that I sat by his bedside when life was fleeting, and heard his last sigh before he passed to death and the grave; dead, but not forgotten.

Then I engaged in mercantile business. I was fifteen years old; sold goods as fast as I could receive them, and prospered fairly for a youngster, Soon I was enabled to command a large credit. This swelled my head a little, and I began to think I was smart; which idea proves the ruin of many young men.

Well, I was a gentlemanly drinker during the day and took in the town by night. Then I thought and argued that I could control myself, and that whenever I saw that whisky was getting the best of me, I would quit.

To make a long and sad story short, with money, and friends to care for me and my money. I led a high life—and no one, with the reason of man, ever dreamed, when he commenced the use of ardent spirits, of ever becoming a drunkard. Unfortunately, though, before he suspects that danger lurks nigh, he has passed the bounds. It is but through Mercy that he can retrace his steps.

Do you remember, reader, the inscription which Dante found upon the Gates of Hell? "Ye who enter here, leave all hope behind." And it is almost so when the fatal thirst has seized upon one of us. There is no by-path of escape; it is the mercy of God that opens a way, and He will help us, even unto the end. Praised be His holy name. But I will go back to my own early and useless life.

Notwithstanding my dissipation, I continued to accumulate. With all my faults, I will be allowed to say that I am liberal in the extreme. Gatesville was a pleasant little town, and I enjoyed the esteem and confidence of jolly companions. Often would I visit the Eastern cities, and, after my return, would tell the village boys about my trip. I was only drinking to be social with my fellowmen, or drive a trade. To have called me an "inebriate" would have been insulting. I loved and had confidence in my fellow man. Gifted with idle jests and a talent and love for talking, we passed days of pleasure and nights of mirth. When I took an evening ride with my sweetheart, a little wine and cinnamon bark added zest, eloquence, poetry and song to my conversation. Sometimes she would appear to understand; would laugh, and accuse me of being gentlemanly tipsy. Then I would roll up my eyes like a dying calf and say: "Oh, no; I'm doing this for fun—it's the other boys, not this boy, who are drunk." The barkeepers laughed at my anecdotes, and set up the first drink to get me started.

Strangely enough, I prospered. One of my clerks handed me six thousand dollars at one time —all my own. How often, when I think of this happy time, and then of the ills which afterwards came upon me, caused by the fiend in whose toils I have been, that it would have been better if the

grave had opened then and I had sunk into its bosom. I was welcomed everywhere by moneyed people. "Belshazzar, King of the Chaldeans," opened his wine. Vanity Fair opened wide her portals to admit me. Happiness was with me and around me, as my gleeful voice echoed in the air, and, were it not for the *cursed stuff*, I might be happy now. Unaware of the danger, I fell into the power of rum. I falsely pictured peace when there was no peace. I had contracted a habit I could not shake off; and with the speed of lightning I was going down the hill. Roused to consciousness of danger at last, the serpent folds were about me, and I had no power to escape.

I made a miserable failure in business; and in six months, could not raise two dollars to go to a circus. All of my time was spent around saloons, devising and concocting some scheme to get a drink. Almost every day I had a drunken row; was tried before every court for some crime. My property, first mortgaged, then sold—and I was driven out into the cold, to find sustenance from the hard hand of charity. Friends! I had them not, although they had my money. Finally I became so disconsolate that I purchased a bottle of chloral, went into an old vacant store, barred the doors, drank the deadly poison, and then laid me down to die. Pictures of horror were before me. Describe them I cannot well do. Men and women,

in the ghastly cerements of the grave, ghoulish figures in the dread decomposition of death, went whirling in a Maelstrom of vapor before my frenzied vision. Then I could see faces—the faces of the loved and lost—faces that never in life had looked upon me save with eyes of love. They glared and gibbered to me from the dark corners—for night had come—and pointed at me in fiendish glee. I implored them for pity; they waved me back with the same demoniac laughter. Then, again, came the fearful whirlpool; house, myself, the world, faces I had known, scenes I remembered, all mingling, surging, sweeping, on in one mad velocity.

Unconsciousness mercifully crept upon me. There I lay for twenty-four hours, a wretched dying drunkard. Several charitable gentlemen found me, and nursed me back to life. There are Christian people in this world. May God bless those good men who came to me in this saddest of all hours.

Did I let drink alone? No! Shame and remorse led me still further, and into darker and more dismal ruin I struggled. But, finally, I sobered for a few days, and again obtained a situation as fruit tree agent, these charitable men hoping that absence from the purlieus of a town might save me. This was quite a fall from my former circumstances. Sensitive about my penniless con-

dition, again I resorted to the wine cup for consolation—for a moment's forgetfulness. Going to Hamilton for the purpose of selling trees, I remained there drunk a full week without mentioning my business. Then, without a nickel, I went through Comanche, only succeeding, however, in getting drunk, and from thence to Callahan county, which, at that time, was the "Wild West." I was a fair singer, a good yarn-teller, and. in that way, entertained the barkeepers and saloon loungers for my whisky. I figured on robbing a train to "make a raise," but I am thankful to my God now that I never succeeded. I know that some old, long-faced brother, will condemn me, and throw down my book when he reads this; but whisky and circumstances will change a man's whole nature. As well undertake to point out a tree in the forest that had never been shaken by the winds as to point out that individual whom evil temptations had never swerved.

In Belle Plains the hotel-keeper put my saddle in his cellar to hold for my board; but, with my six-shooter, I persuaded his French cook to bring it out and nicely arrange it on my horse. I will not stay to explain, but I was not altogether to blame in this violent transaction. The recollection of this melancholy trip affects me still, somewhat like vitriol thrown upon a fresh wound. Much, indeed, would I sacrifice to forget it.

CHAPTER IV.

HOMEWARD BOUND—SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES—HORSE RACE—NIGHT WITH A BAPTIST MINISTER—HIS KIND ADMONITION — FRIENDSHIP — ARRIVE IN GATESVILLE—FALL OUT WITH THE HYPOCRITE—DRUNK EIGHT MONTHS—BEG IN WACO—CLERK FOR SANGER BROS—SOBER—ON A SPREE—ROW IN GATESVILLE HOTEL — ESCAPE — HARDSHIPS — FUGITIVE FROM JUSTICE.

From Belle Plains I returned home, and on my way stopped at a horse-racing ground, where I do not see how I escaped death, for I had several close combats, with deadly weapons, and with men physically much stronger than I. It was the whisky; it was not myself. People say that what is in a man sober, will come out when he is drunk. But it is not so; when you have gone to the last stage and last degradation of drunkenness. I started home, beating and bluffing my way. I remember staying all night in Hamilton

county with a Baptist preacher, who had prayers. It was the first family worship I had heard since a boy. In his prayer the good old gentleman intimated that he knew I was leading a wicked life, and prayed the Eternal Spirit to reform me. Then I thought of childhood; how we knelt around our hearthstone at home, and how my good old father prayed for the protection of his children. It was the first word of sympathy I had heard for years. I had felt that no friends were left me. I believe it was Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, who once said to Henry Clay, that a home and true friends are the grandest gifts from God to man. My experience has been that the most unfortunate, unhappy feeling that can ever befall any member of the human family is to feel that he has no friends.

"Oh! what is life without a friend
To dissipate our gloom;
A path where naught but briers grow--
Where flowers never bloom"

Then it was I felt I had found a friend—a father—in the good old man. While he prayed I wept. When he arose from his knees, I went to him as a child might go to its parent. He pointed me to the beauties of the Christian religion; how I had a friend in Jesus; that a blessed Savior came into this world for me; that he hung on Calvary's Cross for me; that he cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and that was for

me. Then it was I realized how ungrateful I had been, and what a wretched sinner I was. He told me that the Lord would not always chide, neither would he keep his anger forever. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth me. That the goodness of God was stamped upon the broad, blue sky, and twinkled in every star. Repentance began to move within me. His words touched the tenderest chords of my heart, and that night I plead for mercy.

When morning came, after a delightful country breakfast, the old gentleman saddled his horse to ride with me a little way. As a father would talk to his son, so the good old man talked to me. Then he said good-bye, and we parted, but his admonitions lingered with me many a day. Several times on my journey home I hitched my horse and knelt by the roadside. Onward toward home I went, fully resolved to lead a better life.

As soon as I reached Gatesville I sought one of the leading members of the church, and told him, God being my helper, I would be a better man. Also, I wanted to borrow a Bible to read. He said he did not believe a word of it—that it was another one of my tricks. That made me angry. He seemed to thank his God that he was not like other men, and gave me no encouragement, whatever. His face looked as long as a fishing pole, and he was as serious as an undertaker. He

had belonged to the Methodist church forty years, and it hadn't cost him but a quarter. He had been sitting on a hollow log most of the time; singing, "I'm Glad Salvation's Free." God pity such hypocrites; they will get due reward. Stumbling blocks are they, indeed, to those who would turn to the better life. I did not strike him in the face, but got drunk, and remained on one spree for eight months. With me it was to drink one day to drown the shame and agony of the day before. I went to Waco and slept about wagon yards, depots, and all sorts of dives for two months, without a clean shirt. Many old friends refused to recognize me on the streets. Occasionally I would go out in the suburbs and beg for something to eat. How often I prayed to die! One morning I met a young man on the streets who carried me into a barber shop, had my long hair cut, and paid for a shave. God bless the noble young man! Slight as the deed was, I think the angels of Heaven must have rejoiced over the philanthropy of this Christian gentleman. Then I hired to Sanger Brothers, and acted as high porter in the sweeping department for a week; but I never stay in the lower department when I remain sober, and soon was raised to a clerkship. Two indictments stood against me in Gatesville, for assault with intent to murder, and Mr. Sanger allowed me to return to my trials, which I did,

sober, and like a gentleman—and came clear.

For three months all went nicely. But on Christmas night I was walking up the street, and found several clerks in a bar-room, drinking. They appeared to be having a jolly time, and insisted that I should take "just a little, and no more." As soon as I had tasted the cursed stuff I was doomed. All night I rambled; then left Waco for Gatesville—drunk. It is my disposition to go somewhere, to travel, when I am under the influence of intoxicants. One night in Gatesville I walked into a hotel, and they ordered me out. I take all the blame upon myself, but I didn't go just then. The consequence was another drunken row. I will not attempt to describe the battle, but we raised a pandemonium, and frightened the guests out of their wits. Two young men awoke me early next morning, and persuaded me that it would be best to leave the country, as there was sufficient evidence to send me to the penitentiary. There was, of course, no likelihood of my being able to give bond, so I made my escape. I slept in the Leon river bottom for ten days, fed by a negro boy.

Sometimes, at midnight, when all was silent, the village people slumbering, I would walk through town—gazing with a sadness too intense for words, at the houses where I had once been an honored guest, the inmates of which, now, would

have driven me forth as a vagrant, or handed me over to justice as a criminal. Whither should I wander, and what should I do? But I can say to my readers, now, and with a heart filled with gratitude to God, that He has never deserted me, though, at many wretched moments in my life, I have felt that he had. In the darkest days of my degradation and misery, He has not failed to raise up a friend for me. So it was in the present case. When hope was well nigh dead, despair croaking within my breast—then came this unexpected succor. I received some money, clothing, and a pony. Then disguised, under the name of *Smith*, I traveled northawrd until I reached Fort Worth.

CHAPTER V.

FT. WORTH — VARIETY THEATRE — THE DELIRIOUS DANCE OF DEATH—PAINTED FEMALES—THEY SAY "I HAD A FIGHT"—ARRESTED—LIFE IN A TEXAS PRISON — DESPERATE RESOLVES — DYING WITH PNUEMONIA—THE PATH TO RUIN, DEGRADATION, AND HELL—

My first night in Fort Worth was one of hideous debauchery. I attended a variety theater, with a bar-room attached, of course. After the performance came dancing, in which I madly joined. Anything! Anything! to forget my troubles. And, throughout the long night, I mixed and mingled with this delirious dance of death. After each set, it was the custom in this infamous house to treat the painted female—the mockery of womanhood—who had acted as partner. I was introduced to the proprietor. He laughed loudly at every vile anecdote I told, flattered me, and so did his myrmidons, and the scant-arrayed creatures, miscalled women—as recklessly I threw my money over the bar. Then back I rushed to the

dance, and the mad revelry went on. If, while looking at Holbien's celebrated painting. "The Dance of Death," I should see each skeleton with its burning eyes, step from the canvas and join in a ghastly whirl, it could scarcely horrify me more than the recollection of that night. If the laughter of mocking fiends in the dim corners were not heard, it was, perhaps, the mirthless, delirious laughter of mortals, which drowned it. Whisky was the god; delirium the high priest; death and madness the ministers of that house of hell.

It is the old story. I continued drinking until all my money was gone, as well as all I could borrow. Then I tried to get credit where all my money had gone—in the same saloon—but those who knew me then, knew me no longer. Then I would hang around, lean on the counter, and beg for a drink. They would call me a drunken dog. Reckless, miserable, as I was, I had not spirit enough to resent it. The hotels would not receive me. The weather was icy cold, and I had no shelter.

Dissipation had about crazed me; I had been drunk so long. At this epoch remembrance leaves me, but they tell me I had a fight. They arrested me and placed me in jail. There I lay for days and weeks, and months. I could not tell how many. I cared not to count them. I endured the hardships of prison life in the Forth Worth

jail, with one lousy blanket, and three horse-thieves for companions. While I slept upon an iron floor; the cold breezes of the north pierced and chilled me. I shivered because I had no clothing. And there I lay suffering, not so much in body as in mind—a pauper, a jail-bird, a tramp. The thoughts that came to me then were weird and strange, and I cannot describe them now; but I wondered, among other phantasms, why God permitted his creatures to immure a fellow-creature like brutes in an iron den. How often did I long for the weapons of to-day and the future—the weapon that equalizes the rich and the poor—dynamite. What a magnificent spectacle, as masonry, iron shutters, keepers, wretches and myself mounted to the heavens together. Such a spectacle the people of Fort Worth would have had if my desperate desires could have been satisfied.

I was made for liberty and fresh air, and soon was taken dangerously ill with pneumonia. The county physician was sent for. He came in in a careless manner, with a cigar between his lips, knelt by my side, felt my pulse, and said that I was dying.

After he had gone came thoughts natural to the dying, and the following may truly be called impromptu :

"Dying, yes, slowly dying"
Here on my pallet, hard,
While echo mocks my sighing
In this dismal prison ward.

No sound of a petition
Goes upward for my sake,
They call me in derision
A jail bird—human wreck.

Yet, sad the recollection
Ere trouble came to me,
I owned the deep affection,
Of home and family.

With friends, a home, and treasure—
I envied none on earth;
My days were days of pleasure,
My nights were nights of mirth.

What wrought this change, O, Heaven—
Let me not think of that;
My temperament was uneven,
Injustice on me sat.

Come, death—kind death—relieve me,
Set free my burdened soul;
Let earthly ills not grieve me
Till I reach man's destined goal.

In spite of imprisonment, wretched treatment, bad food, lice, cruelty and agony, I grew better, though I cannot understand it, for we were treated worse than brutes. The jailor would not give me a bit of coffee, sick as I was. I know not whether this wretch be alive or dead. If alive, he has "a certain fearful expectation of judgment;" if dead, some fiend is pouring red hot coffee grounds down his throat—perhaps.

There were fifty-two prisoners in the jail, and with the exception of the thieves, pickpockets, etc., nearly all said whisky had landed them in this delectable retreat. I do not hate bark-keepers; I wish them well, and in some better business, but, before

I would stand behind a counter and deal out the cursed stuff to the rising generation, I would almost repeat the same wretched life. O! my God, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest my heart; I come not asking for earthly fame or treasure, but give me wisdom and strength to wield an influence over young men, that they follow not in my footsteps, which have strayed down the path that leads to ruin, degradation, and hell.

As I close this chapter, I go down upon my knees. I am yet weak, and temptation is before me still. Christian reader! will you not pray for me?

CHAPTER VI.

MCBETH COMES AFTER ME—HIS KINDNESS—IN THE GATESVILLE JAIL — BOND WITHOUT REQUEST — MELANCHOLY AND DISGRACE—FORCE THE STAGE DRIVER TO HAUL ME—IN WACO—TRIP TO WHITNEY—MEET AN OLD FRIEND—HIS DEATH—ALONE IN RAGS AT HIS GRAVE—A PENNILESS EXILE.

W. A McBeth, of Coryell county, came for me, as I was wanted at court in that county. I will ever thank him for his kindness. It was a mystery to the Fort Worth officials when he refused to chain me down. We traveled for several cold days through the country in a wagon. As we passed through Cleburne the people gathered around to take a look at the villain. One old gentleman asked me to what I attributed my ruin. I made him no answer, but pointed toward a saloon. We arrived at Gatesville on Sunday, and I spent the night in jail, though I had two blankets, and the cells were more comfortable than in Fort Worth, and the food given me was decent.

The next morning without any request a bond

was made, and I was released. But, like the Prisoner of Chillon, I almost preferred the solitude of a lonely prison cell to the cold charity of the world. And as I walked the streets, feeling disgraced, without a word of comfort or recognition from those whom I had known for years, the spot of verdure—the oasis of tenderness—left in my heart was bleeding for one kind word. But I never found it. My clothes were tattered from the filth of the prison, I was covered with creeping insects. I begged fifty cents from a negro (once my servant), and invested in whisky—my blood runs cold when I write the word "whisky." As water seeks its level, so I sought the company of the unfortunate. Ashamed to stay at home, I took the stage about dark for Waco. The driver called for my fare, but, half drunk and reckless to the extreme, I demanded to ride free or die. We finally arranged matters, and got along very pleasantly. About 2 o'clock in the morning we arrived in Waco. I saw a bar-room open, and entertained the fellow so successfully with the ups and downs of my life that he gave me several drinks.

I hung around Waco a few days until an excursion party started for the then new town of Whitney. I got aboard the train. The conductor called for my ticket, but I had no ticket, he called for my money and I had no money. As it was but a short ride he didn't put me off—but I have struck

several clever conductors in my rounds who would help me off at every water tank and tunnel on the road. Two young men sat on the seat in front of me, and to one, in by-gone days of my prosperity I had loaned money without interest or security, and when on the bed of affliction I had carried him to my home, employed a physician and nursed him back to life again. For the other I had obtained a situation; but alas, they remembered me not. They gazed at my clothes; asked where I had been and whither I was going, but seemed ashamed to converse with me. They smoked cigars and drank wine in my presence, but they offered me none. Kind reader, could you only imagine my feelings on that occasions, it would teach you a lesson never to be forgotten.

When we arrived in Whitney I saw, standing apart from the crowd, a young man whom I had also known in days of prosperity, and so well acquainted was I with his disposition that I was confident of his friendship under any and all circumstances. I approached him and held out my hand, which he grasped with brotherly affection. But I noticed that he was also seedy. "Ed, have you got any money?" was my first remark. His voice trembled as he answered: "No, Harry; whisky has ruined me." I had known him from childhood. He was at one time the pride of his country; had graduated at the head of his class, and married

the belle of his county. I was one of his attendants, when he was married, and enjoyed the hospitality of his hearthstone. I had ridden in Pullman Palace cars with him, and drank champagne with him in the finest hotels on the Continent, with servants to wait upon us. His father was wealthy and left him a fortune. He selected a beautiful country site and reared upon it a palace more beautiful than the Isle of Blennerhassett. Shrubbery that Shenstone might have envied, bloomed around him. Music that might have charmed Calypso and her nymphs, was his. An extensive library spread its treasures before him. A philosophical apparatus revealed to him the mysteries of Nature. Pictures by old masters adorned the walls of the mansion he lived in. Lace curtains were swept gracefully from the windows; his parlors illuminated by brilliant chandeliers, while the sweet breezes would blow from orange groves, through fields of flowers into marble halls, to dwell upon his happy home. He had a noble heart, a brilliant mind; he gave to the poor, he comforted the sick. No beggar ever knocked at his door without relief —but at last whisky ruined him. He drank from time to time until not only his fortune and happy home were gone for the accursed stuff, but he was heavily involved, with the stain of crime marked upon the records of his country against him; and he was compelled to seek seclusion, with a ficti-

tious name in the solitude of this western land. His beautiful wife he left shivering in poverty behind him. Poor husband and poor wife! May Heaven pity and protect you, for the horrible habit has ruined a realm on earth.

It was Sunday. We walked to the hotel together. We looked and felt so forlorn that it required quite a fluency of conversation to get dinner without money. After dinner we walked up town, and there I parted with the last family relic I had left me under the broad canopy of Heaven. It was a ring, placed upon my finger years before by a good old mother, with the parting words: "Be good, my boy, and keep this in remembrance of me." For the ring I received three dollars; I believe it cost some twenty-five. To drown our weak, disconsolate feelings, we spent the three dollars, all for whisky. But the landlord would not let us return. We were called old drunken tramps, which is hard to take. Cold, weak and hungry, we slept around lumber yards and depots, and on the following night I begged a drunken Irishman for a nickel (God bless the Irishman, he gave the last nickel he had), and with this amount I bought bread.

I shall never forget the beautiful night in December when we wandered down the railroad together to divide the bread. We had two and one-half cents' worth each, and in all my experi-

ence (and I have looked at both sides of the world), I never saw two young men so disconsolate as on that occasion. We cared not to look upon the fair morning as it broke upon the pale path of night. We cared not to gaze with delight upon the bright sunlight as it arose from the dark sea and sank to rest beneath the Western waters. This world had lost all its gladness and sweetness to us, and we prayed to die. We were silent, until poor Ed said: "This is hard, isn't it Harry? Did we ever think we would come to this?" "Whisky has ruined us," was all that I could say; and as the pale moon and silvery stars glittered in the liquid air to deck a world in glory, I saw tears tricking down the poor boy's cheeks.

Young gentlemen, when you read this, take warning, and don't drink—for it will ruin you. It is better that a man had never been born than to be addicted to the habit. And it is so sad to tell you—I write this in sorrow: My young friend never lived to return to his home again, not even as a prodigal son. He never lived to look upon the face of his fair young wife any more. Oh, no! He died in an old out-house with delirium tremens; was buried by the charity of the county, and I was the only one to stand over the poor boy's grave, in my rags, and weep. I humbly ask you, kind reader, to pray for the unfortunate, the wrecked and ruined, that they may be reclaimed,

even though late. And if you know any such one —one of those whom Victor Hugo terms, not as a word of reproach, *Les Miserables*, or "the wretches," men sunk in poverty and degradation through their own vices—I say, if you know such an one and they are everywhere, strive, O! strive to reclaim them! Even kind words are so cheap, so easily spoken, and can do so much.

CHAPTER VII.

AS A WRETCHED TRAMP—MEET A CHUM—WALK TO WEATHERFORD— PLAY THE DETECTIVES GAME—FLIRTATION—RUN AWAY—SWIM THE BRAZOS—IN THE BACK WOODS—MY MAIDEN SPEECH—MY FRIEND AS SCHOOL TEACHER.

As I am writing this little book from memory, I will not attempt to give any dates. From Whitney I wandered on foot as a ragged tramp from town to town. Remorse and melancholy looked me full in the face, and told me my happy days were all gone, and those who had claimed to be the friends of my confidence now held me in derision and shame. No one seemed to care for me; no one cheered me with a kind word. A poor, disconsolate, broken-hearted wretch! I slept at night with a lonely rock for my pillow, and no mantle but the sky, and dreamed of my sad fate. God help fallen humanity! and may their lives be a warning to the rising generation. When you drink you lose your money, and when you lose your money you lose your friends. In Whitney again I landed,

and met another one of my old companions whom whisky had ruined. "We will rise from this condition, or die, Harry," said poor Media, as he shook my hand. We traveled together to Weatherford, where we stopped at a Dutch restaurant. We told the proprietor that we were detectives, and dressed in rags to throw fugitives from justice off their guard, but cautioned him to be quiet. He faithfully promised to assist us, all in his power. The detective trick worked fine. The Dutchman had lost a fine horse, which he thought was stolen by his wife's divorced husband, who was jealous of him, and he wanted shrewd, disguised detectives like us to catch him. The Dutchman bought a keg of beer and told us to help ourselves. I will leave it to you to guess whether we drank or not. Well, no, we didn't drink—we poured. We hired a livery team and had it charged to the Dutchman. He was anxious to get his wife's divorced husband in the penitentiary, and was willing to make any sacrifice for the pleasure of those he thought were detectives. We drank and ran with little Dutch girls for two weeks—playing off as detectives in disguise. When steamed up I would forget all my troubles and played my part well. The Dutch girls had read and heard romantic stories about how detectives dressed in various styles to trip fugitives from justice, and in less than two days we were both engaged to get married to the Dutch

girls. My reader will allow me the sincerity to state, that I had no intention of wrongfully deceiving an innocent, confiding girl, but under these pinching circumstances a little flirtation was not only essential to appearances, but to hold the high esteem of Dutchman and family, to get something to eat, and a place to sleep. I never was a ladies' man. At best, I am ugly, and how Rebecca (as she was called) took a fancy to me I can not understand. It is however, an old and wise axiom that "There is no telling about the decision of a Justice of the Peace,or the affections of a woman," —I suppose however the detective's story blinded her, consequently I will attempt to describe her thus.

Of all the maidens of the land their was none to vie with her in beauty. With a low, sweet voice, she was fair as the blushing clouds which float in early morning across the blue heaven; her golden hair flashed a glory from her head dazzling as the rays which stream from the sun-lighted sky. A slender and symmetrical form, a graceful demeanor and a Dutch lisp, she never failed to gladden the hearts of all who dwelt within her presence. Oft we roamed together as free as the deer upon the mountain side. Many a time we wandered beneath the branching elms, while the dew drops glistened like jewels on the leaves, or sat beneath the ivy bowers as the light of evening faded from the sky

and the blue veil of mist fell upon the sleeping hills. Oft I told her of my travels far away, where there were all sorts of trees with fruits and flowers; where the oranges shone like gold among the dark leaves, and great bunches of dates hung from the tall palm trees which bowed their heads as if they were asleep; about the delicious fragrance from the lime groves, and about the many beauties and luxuries never seen in America, but which blossom and ripen under the hot sun in Syria. As I told of these things I could see from her soft eyes that she sighed to become the wife of a *Great Detective.*

Finally, I became conscientious and told my friend I did not care to flirt any longer, that we were not only tramps but fugitives from justice, and that it would be best to move before we were suspected. Before the dawn of day while they all were sleeping—while the stars still glimmered in the pale light of the morning, we clandestinely stole away and left the Dutch family with the "bag to hold." Along the valleys, over the hills, through the woods, we traveled for eighteen miles and came to the banks of the Brazos river. The river was partially covered with a thin sheet of ice, and our only opportunity to cross was to break the ice and swim. A stiff norther was blowing, and it was rapidly growing colder. Hesitating for a moment only, we undressed, leaped into the cold and

dangerous stream, and safely swam to the opposite shore. Before we could dress; our clothing, which unfortunately got wet, was frozen. This was hardship, truly. It seemed more than we could bear. "Will it always be thus, Harry?" said my poor friend. "I see no light in the future; the way of the transgressor is hard," was my only reply.

On reaching a house, we received (to our surprise) great kindness from the hand of strangers. After warming and thawing our frozen clothing, we ate a delightful country supper and spent the night with a cultured, pleasant family. There is something in every man's face, tact and manners, no matter where you find him, to tell not only his raising but the warmth of his heart. So we confided to this gentleman all our misfortunes, confessed our dissipated career—and offered to work on his farm. He deeply sympathized with us, and suggested that a school teacher was wanted in the neighborhood and he would do his utmost to obtain the position for one of us.

This indeed was a back woods country. With the exception of the kind family with whom we stopped, the people did not know much. The trustees of the school however were called together and I made my maiden speech. Generously, in the outset, I offered the school to my friend, stating in my premises that he was more scholarly than myself. I amplified on his educa-

tion and morality; claimed to have graduated under him in Alabama; and did not believe he had an equal as a school teacher in the United States; that he had spent his life in the school room, and was called on for advice from all the wise men of the East. Then I bitterly opposed compulsory education, and thanked God this "was a land of freedom;" told about the late cruel and destructive war, and the wounds my friend received on the dreadful battle field at Chickamauga. Then I looked wise and repeated the following on liberty: We come to teach you, said I, the hymn of liberty, that hymn to which every true American heart is attuned.

"A hymn that is as wide as our broad continent, and strong as the surges of the Atlantic; that sounds in the wild wind that sweeps through the pine forest of the north, and sings in the soft breezes of the Southern Savannas; that swells with the rush of mountain torrents, and sings with exultant joy through the high arches of our sun-lighted sky; that is sweet as the ripple of waves, and grand as the roar of Niagara,—the hymn of liberty."

After I had closed this eloquent discourse, my young friend took me aside and said he was afraid I had ruined every thing; that the people could look at him and tell that he was too young for the war, and his appearance and wearing apparel was

too forlorn and ragged for a Professor as I had termed him in my address. In fact (he said) I had "let the cat out of the bag." But not so, for before we returned to the house they had unanimously chosen him to take charge of the school at once, and enrolled the names of eighteen large girls and twelve boys for pupils. Notwithstanding my deplorable condition, I could not help but laugh at the ridiculousness of this occasion; and when he called the school to order the subsequent Monday morning he reminded me of the "Parson" in Sut Lovingood's yarns—he had on a Yankee roundabout, and koon skin cap with a long tail to it.

* * * * * * *

Language here fails me to describe myself.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRAMP—TRAMP—TRAMP.

I left Weatherford, a full-fledged tramp; cold, hungry and ill-clothed. The life of a tramp can have little interest to my readers, but from what I have seen I can make a few novel dissertations. The genius "tramp," can be divided threefold: The tramp from necessity, the tramp who will not work, and the tramp from pure knavery. To the first of these I claim the doubtful distinction of belonging. I would not steal, but (and now my very soul revolts at the recollection) I was not too proud to beg. To what will not whisky bring a man?

Over the hills and vales of Western Texas I journeyed. Soon night began to approach. For the first few hours I had traveled through an unfrequented and uninhabited district; but as twilight came, from a hill top I could see many cottages in which hospitable fires already glowed. Descending, I pressed forward. Night was upon me when I knocked at the nearest farm house, and asked

for shelter. "You will have to ask mother. She will let you stay," said the buxom girl who met me at the door.

"Then please tell your mother to step here."

"Mother has gone to Squire Sanson's. You have to walk down this road and turn to the left. It is only a mile and a half. Dad's gone to bed, and he's drunk, and don't like strangers."

I turned to leave in the freezing night, and had not gone more than two hundred paces before a shadow swept by me, causing me to look around. It was the same girl I had spoken to, and she had her apron full of something.

"Stop," she said, clear out of breath, "take this," and she held out her apron. My first act was to run my fingers through a pie which she held in her apron; then to fill my pockets with biscuit, pieces of ham and ginger bread; the kind lass even assisting me to put the food away. When I was well laden with eatables, she asked me to come back, saying her father "would not wake up for several hours, that she had to attend to her little brother, who had a tube in his breast, until her mother returned; that in the meantime I might lie by the fire." "I don't know what mother might say though," she concluded doubtfully, as she saw I was about to yield.

This decided me. "No," I said, "I will sleep in the barn yonder, if you will let me."

"Wait!" she said, and snatching me by the arm shook me heartily, as if to give emphasis to her words, "wait till I come back." She was off like the wind, leaving me shivering in the north wind. Directly she was back with a carpet rug and a quilt, "Take these," she said, "I'll get 'em in the morning."

"God bless you, my dear," I said, but she was out of hearing. I went to the barn and found the floor half filled with pea vines. It was a struggle to get warm, but eventually I did so, and slept, after long and weary watching. Just here I will mention something I learned on this trip, which, simple as it is, I could never explain. It is this: A man may lie down with his coat on, and nearly freeze. Then he may take his coat off and cover with it, and sleep comfortably even on the bare ground.

How well I remembered that dreary night in the barn! I had little sleep, and how wretched was my awakening—for I had been dreaming of better days. Long before day I had rolled the bed clothing into a bundle, placed it where the girl would find it, and made my way by the light of the stars. About two hours after daylight, I stopped at a farmer's to warm. There I was permitted to lie upon a bed, ragged as I was, and slept soundly for several hours. Then pursuing my journey, I arrived at Granbury as the night fell.

A traveler's appetite is a thing to be imagined,

not described. Already the lunch that poor girl had given me had disappeared, together with the pie which carried the impression of my five fingers. By way of digression—I truly hope she was able to account satisfactorily to her mother for the absence of that pie. Poor girl, with a drunken father, I could truly pity her then, and since then have had the keen pleasure of meeting her.

Her home had become unbearable, I heard, from her father's brutality, and she married a young man of the neighborhood. A short time after, they came to Gatesville on a trading tour. Then I was doing a large dry goods business, and had eight clerks. While at my desk, I recognized her voice, and went forward at once. She had bought all she wanted but a dress. I told her much to her surprise that I was not selling goods that day but giving them away; and placed a lot of silks, velveteens and satins before her to choose from. She walked to another counter and chose instead of the fine goods, a flaming calico. With this I wrapped a dress of satin, and she was very grateful—though her husband said he supposed I had made enough on the other goods he had bought, (about $2.00 worth) to throw in the dresses. But I did not make myself known to her.

The lights of Granbury were twinkling as I walked toward the village, and as I have said, I was very hungry. Let a man know he has noth-

ing to eat, and can get nothing, and the edge of his appetite is as keen as a razor blade. So it was with me. I watched the lights of each house as I passed, trying as if by intuition to discover where I would most likely find food, and what I most needed just then, fire.

Soon I selected a light, in a pretty cottage, and had the satisfaction of seeing that the back part of the house, evidently the kitchen, was also lighted. Thither I bent my shivering steps, and saw through the open window a lady's face; getting there just in time to get besplattered with dish-water as it was thrown. I spoke up quickly.

"Madam!"

"Who's there?"

"Only an unfortunate traveler, Madam. My companions have left me, and I would thank you to give me a little something to eat."

"Who are you, and what are you?"

Cold and miserable, I could think of no further deception, and told her my name. She had a good memory, as the sequel shows.

"Come up to the window," she said; and I presented my unshaven and unkept face to the full glare of the light.

"Mother!" called a girl from the next room, who seemed to be trying to smash all the crockery on the premises, "Mother! you know uncle says never to feed these vagabonds."

The lady looked carefully at my face a moment, and the scrutiny did not please her. "Get away from here, you nasty, dirty tramp! Get away, I say ——" and she continued her tirade, but I did not wait to listen. I was so angry, as well as disheartened, that it put life in my limbs, and I ran through the town and beyond until the last glimmering light had died away in the distance. There I was on the bleak prairie, hungry, cold and hopeless, only doggedly walking onward, for I knew that to stop was to freeze to death.

A man suffering for food will succumb to cold where another with a full stomach can go along cheerily enough. So it was with me. Soon I began to feel that numbness and drowsiness—intensified, by abstinence from whisky, and food—which I knew to forerun death by freezing. Therefore I ran as fast as my benumbed limbs would let me, but directly sank to the ground completely exhausted and almost resigned to die.

I had before tried to make a fire out of the few sticks I could gather, but failed, and my matches were gone. Lying on the ground I made a last desperate search and felt a match in my vest lining. Tearing the vest open with my teeth, I struck the match recklessly. Strangely enough in that howling north wind, the weeds caught—then flickered—then went out. I covered the embers with my hat—again it caught—I piled on weeds. Then,

all was ablaze; sweeping over the prairie like a racer. With it and into it I ran—how far I cannot say, until I reached a burning log and stayed by it until day. There I watched the fire lighting up the southwest for miles in extent. It destroyed $25,000 worth of property—but I didn't freeze.

Now, if I am permitted to remain to leeward of my log heap a little while before proceeding on my travels, I will mention something of a future meeting I had with Mrs. F., the lady who ordered me out in the night to freeze. No thanks to her if I did not, though I did accidentally burn her cattle range.

By the time I was fairly on my feet, and doing a heavy dry goods business in Gatesville, Mrs. F. had moved to a county adjoining Coryell. With her daughter she visited Gatesville, and was socially quite popular. At an evening's entertainment I was introduced to, and recognized her at first glance. Could I ever forget that metalic voice and the peculiar way she compressed her lips. She was a widow; still handsome, though considerably in the shade of thirty; vain and fond of admiration. Intelligent, too, she was; could talk well on any subject—was rather bookish. Therein was congeniality between us, for while I make no literary pretensions, I read closely and love to talk of the works of masters. She would make me turn her music at the piano by the hour.

I met her often, even at my own home.

One day she expressed regret that she had not met me before. "Why, Madam," said I, "We met long ago."

"Where, Mr. Watkins?"

"In Granbury."

"Bless me! Where was it? At Judge F's or Mr. C's?" and she volubly ran over a dozen names.

"No, it was at your own house that I met you."

"What! At my house! Surely you jest, Mr. Watkins. Who introduced you, pray?" she asked half jestingly, thinking me in the same humor.

"Madam, you introduced yourself."

"Introduced myself?"

"Indeed you did. A pan of dish-water in my face I considered a very forcible introduction."

"I don't understand you, Mr. Watkins."

"I understood you, Mrs. F., when you ordered me off in the freezing night. Don't you remember ordering off a tramp who looked in your back window one winter night?"

"You astonish me, Sir. Surely that couldn't have been you--You! I never shall believe it."

"It was me, Mrs. F., yet I cannot blame you. But I beg you to believe that I had the same heart in me then that I have now. We often mistake the unfortunate." * * * *

It would be wearisome to the reader if I recounted all the hardships I had to endure before

I reached Gatesville; but all things have an end; even life and suffering.

On a Sabbath evening I arrived in sight of my village home. Being ashamed of my rags and degradation, I waited in the suburbs for darkness to overshadow the earth. Seating myself upon a large rock by the side of a little stream where I had often sat under different circumstances, all seemed to me like a dream. On this very rock I had carved my name, and here, also, was the name of the fairest in all the land, whose hand and heart I won. Ah, then, I was happy as the sun-beams which gild the fields. Life was like an unbroken summer to me. But now I was beset with pitfalls; with prowling beasts and hissing serpents. The green foliage of the high hills around my once happy home had withered and gone. To me, stricken homeless and alone, the smiling valleys and lovely plains were as solemn midnight. Suddenly I heard a buggy approaching—a lady and gentleman out riding. Ah! that voice, that laugh, I remembered well. She had called me in days gone forever, the "Prince of Manhood;" but swiftly both pass me by. They know not the drunken beggar now. Soon all grew dark and silent, broken only by the song of the brook; as it glided over its pebbled bottom. With feeble limbs and tattered clothing, I staggered into town. There was a name over the door where I had merchandised.

CHAPTER IX.

IN GATESVILLE AGAIN—BETTER TIMES—BREAK MY OATH—CHRISTIAN SUPPORT—THE SABBATH BELLS DELIRIUM AND ITS HORRORS—AN AWFUL NIGHT—BLOOD HOUNDS ON MY TRACK—IN THE DARK LEAVE—CARRIED BACK TO TOWN—SYMPATHY—PAWN MY COAT — A GENTLEMAN'S PHILANTHROPY—HOME, SWEET HOME.

I slept in a vacant store. But fortune sometimes will relent for a season. The next day two gentlemen went my security for a suit of clothing. I burnt my old tramp rags, and again presented a respectable appearance. A kind lady gave me some food and a place to sleep.

I stood my trial, the penalty was reduced to a heavy fine and paid by my mother. Then I engaged in the business of collecting accounts, and spent most of my time riding in the country, to avoid the temptations of town. But I was destined to fall. Going into town a little fellow persuaded me to drink. "I can drink when I please or let it alone. Whisky don't hurt me. My daddy

kept it on the sideboard," and like expressions have sent many noble men to drunkard's graves. My ravenous appetite for strong drink induced me to listen, and before I was aware I was drunk again. My oath that I would drink no more, was on record in the County Clerk's office, and I had some regard for my word; but an oath without Christian support amounts to little in the face of this terrible temptation. In my life I have tried many antidotes for drink. They amount to nothing; but if Christian people will lend a helping hand, a kind word, to raise a fallen brother; pray for him, preach to him Jesus and Him crucified I believe he will ultimately be saved. Once I saw a drunkard fall down the steps of a St. Louis hotel. A man in clerical dress standing by, laughed in derision at him and said: "No drunkard shall enter the kingdom of Heaven." "You are a contemptible hypocrite," said I; "this drunkard may be in Heaven while you howl in Hell."

The three weeks succeeding this first day's debauch I will not attempt to describe, for but few of the events of these miserable days dwell in my memory. Constantly, night and day, was I drunk. But one Sunday morning a faint glimmer of reason, a sense of my condition, came to me. I resolved within myself to get sober or die. Perhaps it was the sound of the Sabbath bells that made this resolution strong. Who has not felt a flood of

recollections rush upon him — recollections of home, childhood, innocent days, when listening to these solemn bells? I walked two miles before eating, to gain an appetite and keep away from the saloon. When I returned everything I attempted to eat or drink tasted alike. I went to a physician, obtained some medicine to quiet my nerves, and then went to sleep.

I awoke with delirium tremens. Where I was I knew not, and no one was there to care for me. In frenzied imagination I saw a brigade of soldiers riding at full speed around the house. Their horses were of colossal size and red as blood, and fire streamed from their nostrils. They drew at once a thousand swords, and shrieked out: "We'll crucify him! Crucify him!" Dreadfully alarmed, with a fear that sanity knows not, I looked across the street to call the neighbors to my aid. But these ghostly soldiers, more real than reality itself; were over there loudly calling for "Watkins." In desperation I drew my knife for defense. As I did so a large black, sleek Devil, with a red mouth, stood at the door. He said he would take me back to the Fort Worth jail. At him I rushed with my open knife, but he struck me down with his awful paw.

Then, in reality, I ran out of the house into the night and fled for my life, followed, as I thought, by devils and soldiers, all shrieking on my track,

as I fled like the wind. The superhuman strength of a madman was upon me, and I ran for several hours. I waded the Leon river; the water came up to my neck—it was swift and dangerous—and across, I continued my headlong flight. I heard a thousand blood-hounds on my track. Looking back I could see their fiery eyes, their tongues hanging out and dripping blood, as they rushed after me. They seemed to be gaining on me. Up rushes one of the monsters and leaps at my throat. With a desperate effort I hurled him from me, at the same time falling to the ground, and leaping up and away just as the whole demoniacal pack were about to spring upon me. Faster, still faster, I fled, mortal terror in possession of all my faculties. I could hear the fiends cheering on their hounds. Occasionally a bullet would strike me in the head, but only urged me to greater speed. Finally I saw a dark wood before me. Turning from the road I rushed into the thicket, the brush and brambles tearing my flesh and clothing, and saw the hounds and fiends with torches rush down the road and disappear. Looking back at that horrible night, I sometimes wonder, was I in reality chased by *wolves* in that mad, delirious flight? I cannot tell; and such solution must appear incredible to others, as well as to myself.

Wandering through the thick woods, I saw them searching for me with torches. I came to the

bank of a ravine, and under it found a cave, into which I crept. Dark as pitch it was, yet I could see lizards and creeping insects about me; all intent on biting. So I left the cave in affright, and after wandering several hours, found myself just after day-break at a negro cabin, seven miles from Gatesville. My clothing was nearly torn off, and my flesh pierced in many places—truly I was in a deplorable condition. Word was sent from the cabin, and Luther Allen came and took me back to town.

He procured a bed at the hotel for me, and I took medicine to quiet my overstrained nerves, and again went to sleep. That afternoon Jerry Chittum called and did everything in his power for me. Then I really needed some whisky, for when a man has delirium tremens the only relief is the poison that produced it. Jerry gave me a few toddies, which strengthened my mind, and I realized what was the matter. The liquor helped me much temporarily. At bedtime Chittum gave me an anodyne under the direction of a physician, and left me, as he thought, much better, but at midnight I awoke from horrible dreams to find the room full of jay birds. I tried to reason with myself that this was all imagination and had about become satisfied with that solution, when the birds flew at me all together, pecking at my eyes and face. Out of bed I sprang, opened the door and

ran into the street. But the face of the earth was covered with white rabbits, and every time I moved I would step on a white rabbit, and it would bite my ankles. I ran to a light across the square and into a saloon. The usual crowd was congregated there. They thought it was funny to see a "drunken dog" with the jim-jams. Totally crazed, I told them about the white rabbits, and implored their protection, and they all laughed—naturally enough.

To differ with my fellow-man in religion or politics and still shake him by the hand, is easy for me; I can pardon him with whom I have had the most serious difficulty; I can sleep with an opponent after a heated political debate—such should be the nature of everyone, for, truly, the most contemptible wretch on the face of the earth is the man who has no sense of sympathy. He is a crawling reptile whose venom exudes as he creeps, polluting all he touches. Into such a man God has breathed none of his spirit; and when I see a man like this, I look upon him as a Cain—a marked creature for whom repentance is almost impossible, and for whom is reserved blackness and darkness forever. But, sympathy! What a word is there! Give me not pity—I would scorn it—but sympathy; sympathy is the grandest word in the English vocabulary. It is indicative of innate refinement; self-evident of learning; more

generous than philanthropy, and sweeter than liberty itself. As an Angel of Mercy, it visits the abodes of wretchedness; relieves despair, comforts the sick and dying. In the spirit of generosity it never condemns, but is always ready to laugh with the joyous and weep with the sorrowful. Will my readers forgive the digression?

Well, the men who had lived in part at my expense; had borrowed my money and drank my whisky, now laughed at my miserable, depraved condition. Then I pawned my coat, to a man who owed almost his existence to me, for a drink. But as I lifted it to my mouth a white rat sprang out of the glass, and I hurled the poison at it as it scampered away. There are good people in this world, however. Finally a gentleman took me to his home, where I remained for two weeks under the influence of opiates. During this period I dreamed all over the United States, was everywhere in mad imagination, from Heaven to hell. One evening as I lay recovering from this miserable debauch in my lonely chamber, a lady visitor played on the piano and sang, "Home, Sweet Home." Well do I remember how the burning tears poured from my eyes as I listened, for in all my wanderings and miseries the home of my boyhood and kindred had ever been near my heart.

I knew myself all that was low; a drunkard, a castaway; the cold hut of poverty for my future

dwelling place, and only the bread of affliction, to be eaten with tears, before me. God help you, young man, to abstain from drink, is my feeble but fervent prayer

CHAPTER X.

MAKE A FORTUNE—PAY MY DEBTS—RESTORE CONFIDENCE AND CREDIT—REPURCHASE THE OLD HOME—BUILD A LARGER RESIDENCE—RETURN PAST FAVORS—HUMAN NATURE—AVERAGE ADVICE—PROSPEROUS THREE YEARS—TAKE A DRINK—SPENT A THOUSAND IN ONE NIGHT—STUDY LAW—REMORSE—BANKRUPT.

From this miserable debauch I began to recover, but for a month could scarcely walk around. God pity the six hundred thousand inebriates today. Christian people, fly to the rescue of fallen men and women. Visit the lonely prison cells and find there the felons—shackled by the fetters of dishonor—and give them only a word of consolation—ask him not the cause of his downfall, for it is too late; he may have taken his fate in his own hands and with his own voice bade the goddess take her flight—but ask him not of these things, for he had a mother who may have died when he was a child and left him to find sustenance from the cold hands of strangers. The Nazarene went

among sinners, and wept over Jerusalem, because she "would not;" the angels rejoiced when the thief on the cross repented, and there are thousands of prodigals in Heaven, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

I owed some twenty thousand dollars; but with regaining strength I soon began to accumulate. Riding horseback through the country, I collected claims, traded in stock, and engaged in various speculations. Hope burned bright within me; and I trusted to regain once more the confidence and esteem of my fellow-men. Strange as it may seem, seven months later, I succeeded in discharging the last farthing of my indebtedness, and had a few thousand dollars remaining. One of my intimate friends insisted that I should again try the mercantile business. Taking his advice, I boarded the cars for New Orleans to make my purchases. Arriving in the "Cresent City," I registered at the St. Charles Hotel, and in company with several gentlemen frequently attended the theatre. They invited me to "take a little for the stomach's sake," but I refused, (as one drop would have ruined me) and played to perfection the part of an innocent, moral young man from the country.

Like other new merchants I needed some accommodation, and it was essential to my financial success to walk in the paths of rectitude. I had no trouble in obtaining a ten thousand dollar line

of credit from a first-class house; and returned home. There for the second time I proudly beheld my name written in large gold letters over a fifty foot front store. Then I repurchased and renovated the same residence I had wasted in debauchery.

Customers flocked in from all over the country, and soon I was enabled to return the many favors extended me while in destitute circumstances. It is said that in the hardest heart and least reflective mind there is a tender spot. I do think that my heart (and head) grew softer when prosperity came to me. My resless, fickle nature caused me much trouble, but with those faults I had the predominating qualities of gratitude and sympathy; and never failed to return kindness ten-fold; to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Meeting my obligations promptly, I soon increased my business to a mammoth dry goods establishment, with a score of clerks.

The reader may suppose me a hard man to get along with, and perhaps hard on those in my employ, but not so. In my drunkest hours I have treated them with the greatest kindness. In the main, I have only mal-treated myself—no one else. A little child can control or lead me anywhere, though when steeped in liquor I will slip away like a thief in the night to get a drink.

Selecting a beautiful site in the suburbs of our

little town, I reared upon it a more commodious residence. I can truly say that my house was always open to the homeless and poor. I never refused to assist anyone that I remember; they owe me now, and I never intimate it. The boys called me "Colonel," and the preachers called me "Brother." Money will arrange matters. A few evenings I got a little "full," but was carried to the country and it was kept a profound secret. Money is a great commodity, and property is quite a convenience.

Every career has its aspirants, who pay their respects to those who have reached the goal; there is not a power without its following, not a fortune without its court. The seekers for the future buzz round the splendid present. Every Metropolitan has his stuff.

Victor Hugo said—"Success is a very hideous thing, and its resemblance with merit deceives men. For the herd, success has nearly the same profile as supremacy. Success, that Mæcenas of talent, has a dupe in history, and Tacitus and Juvenal alone grumble at it. In our days an almost official philosophy wears the livery of success, and waits in its ante-room. Succeed, that is the theory, for prosperity presupposes capacity." Win in the lottery and you are a clever man, for he who triumphs is revered. All you want is to be born under a fortunate star. Have luck and you

will have the rest, be fortunate and you will be thought a great man, leaving out five or six immense exceptions, which form the lustre of an age, "contemporary admiration is blear-eyedness."

Why should a little property attract so much popularity, for the same heart is within a man still? I have never been wealthy, but several times have enjoyed a sufficient independence to form a fair idea of human nature, and it is amusing to see people fall in with the tide. Many do good things to be seen. Many wait for the popular side. Talent seldom fills the highest position. Webster, Clay and Calhoun could never be President, because regardless of consequences or public opinion, they fully expressed their convictions. Talent never triumphs in the social circle without the means to maintain it. The world wants to help us when least we need it. How often have I heard the father proffer to help his son, provided he succeeded in business. If successful he would need no help. The advice we receive is in strict accord with circumstances, and is often amusing. For instance, the best advice I ever received was from a bar-keeper just after I had spent all my money; when I was "dead busted," and he saw no chance to make any more out of me. Most graphically, eloquently, and pathetically he advised me not to drink. The hotel man didn't think I was hungry, and advised me not to eat. The merchant advised

me to practice close economy and wear my old clothes. The barber didn't think I needed a shave; the doctor was afraid to give me physic; and the minister thought it best to wait awhile before I joined the church. But after I made this little raise, I was advised to drink, eat, wear clothes, take medicine, profess religion, and join the church immediately.

Prosperity, happiness, and average sobriety blessed me for nearly three years. Then I began to argue with myself that I was a mighty man and could take an occasional drink. This idea in the spring of '84 started me downward again. Reveling with the wine-bibbers, I often would not reach my room until two in the morning; and sometimes not at all. Why I did so, is perhaps more of a mystery to me, than to my readers.

Suicide is horrible and strange. Eminent physicians claim that a man will not commit suicide unless insane, but which is preferable; which is the most sensible? To take life in a second, or with a calm, cool, and sedate mind, to drink from the cup of sorrow—to take your own health, wealth, reputation and hope of Heaven, and then with aching head, trembling nerves and parched tongue, suffer the horrors of the damned. I cannot tell—though some of our brightest minds have been crazed by dissipation. The aged widow tells of a home once dear and beautiful, until intemperance

with ruthless hand had torn down the tender vine of affection which entwined itself around and over her cottage door. Then let us go in agony to the hospital and listen to the wail of insanity, and we will learn from incoherent utterances that more than half its inmates are driven there by intemperance.

The philanthropist goes into the street; out in the cold, on a bleak, freezing night in December. Finding the lonely orphan, she tenderly presses it to her bosom. The eyes of the fatherless and motherless waif, fill with tears, and her heart swells almost to breaking as she tries to say—but cannot say—that her parents died from intemperance.

It seems that home to the poor inebriate is a prison. There is no air there that he can breathe. For a moment he may sport with his children, and smile upon his wife, but his heart is made up to return after supper for his night's rum. He may have wealth and fame, but whisky will curse him and bring his family to poverty.

Flushed with wine, my restless nature led me to New Orleans, where in one night's dissipation I wasted about one thousand dollars. This might have been funny to my crazed brain, and certain sycophantic by-standers for the time, but it was a step downward, nearer hell. Returning home, however, I partially sobered for ninety days; studied law; and applied through the two Texas

Senators for a position in the Consular service. Doubtless I might have filled a position, had it not been for reasons most horrible—of which you will read in subsequent chapters.

Fallen again! O! my God, pity me! and if it be thy will, that man must suffer temporal evil here, impose it upon me. Let the wasting hand of disease inflict its painful torments; but save! O, save me! from the dreadful fate of a drunkard.

CHAPTER XI.

NIGHT AT WACO—FROM TEXAS TO NEW YORK ON A SPREE—DREADFUL FOREBODING IN ST. LOUIS—PUT OFF THE CARS—HOME—DELIRIUM TREMENS.

Leaving Gatesville upon Dec. 18, 1884, I started with Washington City as my aim. I left with $5,500 in my pocket, wishing that I might profitably invest this amount of my property. Reaching St Louis I had enough reason left to know that my condition would not recommend me to Senators and Representatives, through whose influence I hoped, with good cause, to obtain a diplomatic station. So I went to New York to get sober. But this was only throwing a firebrand into the fire. Half crazed, I started back to St. Louis; stopped a day in Indianapolis, where I have an indistinct recollection of attending Vice-President Hendricks' funeral. I thrust myself violently forward; even leaning upon the vault, and wondered why a young lady in black who stood only a few paces away should weep so violently. I started

forward to console and ask the cause of her grief, but happily a policeman prevented this interruption of the mournful ceremony, and led me away.

Next I found myself on the train bound for St. Louis. Here I found my money grow less, day by day, but with enthusiastic recklessness I kept up the debauch; comforting myself with the historical thought in brief intervals of reason: "After this the deluge."

Before I was aware my money was gone and my jolly companions as well. This was the beginning of sin, for there is nothing so sinful in the world's eyes as a moneyless man drinking; while he has money, the fault is condoned. The beginning of sin is bright as the fair morning, but the closing of sin is as the darkness of night. "I met the sinful spirit with her wand. She waved—and it was all enchantment. It seemed as if the angels of God had poured out phials of sweet perfume in the atmosphere. But when she changed her wand, what a dreadful picture did sin present! The melody of music changed to the shriek of agony and the wail of insanity.

I possessed a watch and chain which cost $250. Soon they were in the coffers of the proprietor of a gilded rum shop. Surreptitiously I began to carry my clothing from my room in the hotel to pawn shops, and, sinking socially with my means, began to patronize the lowest dives, where the

vilest decoctions were sold. But who will venture to say that the purest of alcoholic potations is not more poisonous than Prussic acid, since it kills soul as well as body? At the marble-floored saloons, where I had changed my fifties and twenties the bar-keepers began to advise me to "sober up," which meant that it takes money to buy whisky. So, also, when my clothing was gone, the dive-keepers began to say this too, which, while not so elegantly spoken, meant one and the same thing.

Penniless, helpless, drunken and alone in a great city; wearing summer clothing in the bitter wintry weather, what could be worse? But more horrible still than wandering half-frozen through the streets, was my enforced abstinence from liquor. I had drawn on every friend I had who would honor my drafts, but these drafts began to return, and I was left with only this agonizing thirst. Whisky began to taste like water; apparently ceased to affect me. Worse than physical tortures, then there came upon me a mental hallucination, a mortal dread, which pursued me day and night. The idea that I had committed some dreadful crime was ever with me, causing me to stand, shivering in a doorway, or lying under a bridge until night came and I could steal to my accustomed dives. Furthermore, I could remember distinctly having committed these crimes. I

could remember well having committed murder in Texas. To show how horribly circumstantial these hallucinations can be, I seemed to remember perfectly having killed two men, and strangled a child to keep it from giving the alarm; could see the blue marks upon its throat. The consciousness of this crime being firmly fixed upon my mind, they began to multiply. Then I had committed forgery, and the victims were searching through St. Louis for me. The sight of a policeman gave me a rigor at once. With only a bottle for a companion, I lay hidden under an acqueduct bridge for one whole day. I can remember well how I reproached myself there for the murders I had committed; how I tried to find some excuse for my crime, but could think of none. Finally, I convinced myself that I had committed the murders while drunk, and this added to my distress, for I knew it no excuse in law.

When I finally did leave my lurking place at night, I could hear voices calling me around every street corner. "Yonder he goes; we've got him," called out a voice at the corner of 6th street. Then I knew that I was lost, thought my pursuers had me surrounded and were only mocking and playing with me, knowing they had me safe. Alternately, I cursed and begged them, and, I think, nearly frightened a worthy citizen to death by clutching him by the coat and demanding if he

had come from Texas to arrest me. He left me at great speed.

It was then that I determined to go to the police station; confess my crimes, and ask to be sent back to Texas. Overtaking a policeman, I poured some incoherent tale in his ear, begging that he would not let me be lynched, He paid sufficient attention to take me to the station forthwith. There the Captain (McManns) closely interrogated me. I thought I told a straight story about the murder, and made some ridiculous excuse for it; and could not understand why the officers grouped about me laughed so heartily. Besotted and crazed as I was, I could yet understand that some of the questions they asked were absurd. For instance, one of them asked "if I had stolen Charley Ross;" to which I eagerly answered, "yes," not comprehending the question. The group began to disperse, and I was much surprised to find myself neither chained nor handcuffed. I went to one of the officers and asked if my cell was ready; that I was tired. He answered roughly, then looking at me again, gave me a quarter, and bade me "go to h——l." I walked away.

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One bleak night late in December, as a passenger train pulled out of St. Louis, I boarded the rear platform of the sleeper. My condition indeed

was pitiful. With ragged and threadbare clothing I shivered in the cold and rode for several hours unnoticed. Crazed from a long spree a thousand hallucinations came upon me. Often now I think of that dreadful night and wonder how I lived. On being discovered by the porter about one o'clock in the morning I was disgracefully put off, and left at a little switch. Dark and dreary as it was I followed the track crossing frozen bridges and dangerous places.

All that I could see had an attitude of terror, for how many things shuddered beneath the mighty breath of night! The cold pierced me for I had eaten nothing for several days. I vaguely recalled my other nights of horror, on the plains in Texas five years before, and it seemed to me but yesterday.

The most frightful thoughts crossed my mind "pell-mell." There are moments when hideous suppositions assail us like a brand of furies, and violently force the bolts of our brains.

On seeing a cottage house lighted a few hundred yards from the road, I bent my feeble steps thither. Through the illuminated window I could see the blazing fire. A table was laid with eatables in the middle of the room. At this table was seated a man with hearty open face of about forty years of age, who was riding a child on his knee. By his side a woman still young was suckling an-

other child. The father was laughing, the children were laughing, and the mother was smiling. I stood for a moment before this calm and gentle spectacle, and thought this joyous house would prove hospitable. I tapped very slightly on the door, but was not heard; a second time and heard the woman say, "Husband, I fancy I hear some one knocking."

"No," the husband answered. I tapped a third time. The husband rose, took the lamp and walked to the front doot. He was a tall man, as he threw back his head, his turned down shirt collar displayed his full neck, white and bare. He had thick eyebrows, enormous black whiskers, a bull-dog lower jaw, and over all an air of being at home, which is inexpressible.

"I beg your pardon sir, but I am cold and weary, aud would like a cup of coffee, I said in a doubtful, trembling voice.

Who are you? the owner of the cottage asked.

I am Harry Watkins. I was put off the cars at the switch and—. Before I could finish the sentence, the man placed the lamp on a table and took down his gun. His wife arose with the two children in her arms, and hurriedly sought refuge behind her husband, and looked in horror at me as she muttered, The Villain! All this took place in less time than is needed to imagine it. After gazing at me for a moment as if I had been

a viper, he returned to the door and said: "Be off!"

For mercy's sake, I continued, a glass of water.

"A charge of shot," the man answered. Then he violently closed the door, and I heard the bolts fastened. A moment afterwards the shutters were closed, and I was out in the dark, worn out with fatigue and hopeless. I walked a few steps and sat down. I made up my mind to die, though I did not know where I was, not even could I have told the name of the State in which I was.

An icy breeze was blowing, and imparted to the dismal darkness a sort of mournful life. The bushes shook their little thin arms with incredible fury; they seemed to be threatening and pursuing me.

About day break I reached a small village. The first beacon light was from a saloon; like the fly that sings around the candle "I dropped in." While thawing my frozen limbs a liberal young man engaged in conversation with me. Evidently he was up after his early dram but had not yet gone to degradation. Gladly however I accepted his invitations to drink and spent the day in the saloon. I do not remember the name of this village. In fact I do not remember whether or not I inquired, but have a faint recollection of being told that the R. R. terminus was Cairo, Ill., and clandestinely stole a ride in a stock car to the place. Notwith-

standing the rough riding, and cold weather, I fell asleep in the empty stock car on the way and awoke in Cairo the following morning.

Fortune seemed now to change a little. I met on the streets of Cairo a tried and true friend "Alf Williams," who loaned me the money to buy a suit of clothes and a ticket to Gatesville, Texas. I really thought I was a murderer on the dodge, and told Williams an incredible story—though he fully understood that I was guilty of nothing but debauchery and treated me like a brother. Kind reader, you will allow me to add that in all my Ups and Downs I never was guilty of murder or accused of dishonesty. This was only imagination, or an illusion caused by long and excessive use of stimulants.

Arriving home in January I continued this horrible debauch. I was now in debt to a great many friends, and they appeared disgusted with me, at least, I felt very sensitive of my condition, for in addition to the five thousand dollars I left home with, I had borrowed from various acquaintances about the same amount and saw no opportunity of returning it. This spree cost me the loss of health, home, happiness, friends and ten thousand dollars cash. Deeply troubled I could not bear to sober.

In addition to many personal debts I owed sixty thousand dollars and had nothing. Restless, nervous, afraid of,—God knows what—I concluded

to go to Belton, Texas, and when I turned my back to walk to the depot I wept like a child, but soon was sufficiently intoxicated to be somewhat exhilarated, and spent the first night in Moody, Texas, at Jim Christian's hotel; and then came woe and sorrow and despair. When I retired I heard the devils around the house discussing as to what they would do with me. Some wanted to cut my throat, some hang me, while others persisted in shooting me. Through the window I could see them on grey horses as large as elephants, and they all had on tall hats with fire in them; and then I heard the click of a thousand guns, and they told me if I moved they would murder me. I screamed and jumped from my bed, but Christian and others persuaded me nothing was the matter, gave me a dose of morphine and told me to go to sleep. Remember, while this was hallucination still it appeared real to me; and then under the influence of morphine the devils went away—the room was intensely lit up by a thousand electric burners, and was filled with beautiful angels, and, in my imagination, I flew into an unknown world, a door flashed open in Heaven, and I walked the streets of the New Jerusalem. I saw its pearly gates, and a great white throne, and the scenery there was more delightful than human tongue can tell. On the right side of the street I beheld a beautiful green park, with all kinds of

delectable fruits and sweet perfumed roses. Then the angel of love took me by the hand, and welcomed me to Paradise, and brought a snowy white garment for me to wear, and placed in my hands the harp of a thousand strings; but my delight was interrupted by a great giant, who suddenly appeared and denounced me as an impostor. He said he saw me drink in St. Louis, which I denied as bitterly as even Simon Peter denied his acquaintance with his Master, but he led me away from heaven and opened a door a mile square, and then I fell into the bottomless pits of hell, with millions of devils to pour hot lava upon me. I trembled and begged, and plead for death; but they told me no one died there—that I must endure this for eternity.

With morning, I realized my condition, and did not think I could possibly live, but I succeeded in drinking a pint of whisky, which gave me a little strength, and again I started for Belton. There I met an old friend, Harry Bradford. I told him of my wretched condition—that I had been drunk six months, and, at his suggestion, took three drinks at the Buck Horn saloon, and started to the theatre, which he thought would be a relief to my mind, which was so much impaired from alcohol, and there I saw double—every man, woman and child had two heads and four large, green eyes, and they all gave me a death-like

stare in the face. I ran from the theatre out on the streets. Out in the darkness I reflected for a moment that this was an apparition, went into a saloon, and called for a drink, but, as I lifted the vile stuff to my lips, a frog sat on the glass and spat in my face. I threw down the whisky and ran to my room, but found a corpse lying on my bed. On looking around, the room was crowded with devils of every description, with whom I fought and struggled for life all night and after I had gained sufficient strength to walk around I could hear people talk about me on every corner. As I would pass a voice would cry out, "That's him, now!" And then I thought I cannot go home —I am ashamed—I cannot stay here—I am a stranger. The accursed stuff has ruined me. Oh, that I were dead! Oh, that I had died before I had fallen, and were sleeping in the cold grave, where my sister lies!

I walked my lonely room with an agony which only the poor drunkard's heart knows when it first awakens to remorse, and when it looks despair full in the face and feels its hideous incantations tempting him to suicide. I went to Lam pasas, and as I walked into the Globe hotel, cold perspiration poured from me, and I was too nervous to register my name. I retired to my room, and thought of taking my life—to end such a miserable existence, but I did not have even a penknife.

Then I thought of some acts of kindness I had bestowed upon my fellow-man, but something told me that was all forgotten—I was a traitor to my friends—an old drunken dog. Then I kneeled to pray, and then I promised my God if He would pardon my sins and bring back my once happy days, I would tell my tale of woe, of sorrow, for the benefit of my fellow-man.

CHAPTER XII.

PAWNING JEWELRY—THE BOTTLE TRICK—PLAY REVENUE DETECTIVE—THE GREEN BAR TENDER—INTRODUCED AS GOVERNOR OF TENNESSEE—FONDNESS FOR JOKING—IN PHILADELPHIA WITHOUT A DOLLAR—A FREE RIDE—HOW THE YOUNG ARE DECOYED—THE HAND WHICH PUTTETH A BOTTLE TO A NEIGHBOR'S LIPS.

If the reader will allow a little digression, I would speak of what whisky has caused me to lose—and will cause others to lose—besides self-respect and the respect of others. Something, too, I would say about the tricks and wiles the victim will resort to in order to get the poison. I have parted with several watches and rings, and other trinkets innumerable, but, with the exception of two gold rings, I never pawned any of my relatives' jewelry. I have played tricks to get liquor, such as filling a bottle with water, and calling for a fac simile bottle of whisky. When the bar-keeper would quarrel and call for the money or liquor back, I would hand him from my other pocket the

water, and leave him none the wiser. Several years ago the "bell punch" law was in effect, which was ringing a bell after each drink sold. It was an imposition, as they did not ring the bell one time in a hundred.

Finding a green bar-tender in a certain strange town, who did not ring his bell, a comrade and myself arrested him, pretending to be revenue detectives. His eyes glared and his lips trembled, and I could see that he was badly frightened. We, however, only took a quart of his best liquor, a few drinks and left him. I don't much regret this, for I am not even with the bar-keepers yet. At another time I was introduced to a bar-keeper as the Governor of Tennessee. I am not very imposing in appearance, as one might imagine from my life of dissipation, but the scheme succeeded. We received many drinks from the rumseller, in the way of ovation.

My fondness for jesting and practical joking was one of the principal causes of my first going astray. If I could perpetrate a practical joke, I did it, no matter whom it hurt or harmed. One of my most intellectual friends made a remark once, which caused me to reflect for a season. He said: "Harry Watkins' practical jokes are more like the gambols of a fiend in glee than a human being having merriment out of his fellows." I organized and led what we called the Knights of Montezuma, a

mock court in my town, Gatesville. There I learned to speak in public. * * * * * * *

In one of my tramping trips, I stood on the streets of Philadelphia without a dollar. Cold and hungry I was, too. but I could get whisky when I could not get bread, by repeating poetry and giving toasts at the different bar rooms. Thence I traveled to St. Louis without a cent. At this last city a friend bought me an overcoat (which I have since paid for) and a quart of whisky, and thus accoutred, I started southward. It may sound incredible; but I really did pass off upon a little new conductor as President of the road and took a sleeper free. Of course I had my rags well covered by my overcoat. Reader, I never did such a thing sober; when sober I am always able to pay my way. * * * * * * *

Demon Drink caused it all—all my troubles. I have signed away the deeds to two most beautiful homes for whisky; have sold my piano, my horse and buggy, and even looked at my milk cows driven away to pay for a debauch, but I will never do so again. Alss! how often have I said it. Poverty is the invariable result of a fast life. Young man, take my advice: lead a sober, Christian life. It is better, not only here, but on the other shore. When a man's purse is empty his anecdotes become stale; and when he is deprived of his health, his wealth, his home and his happi-

ness; when his last farthing is gone, and he hangs on to the counter and begs for only one drink to quiet his trembling nerves, they will advise him to sober up, and behind his back call him an "old drunken dog."

The saloon loungers prey on the free and liberal-hearted young man. They drink his whisky, partake of his hospitality until his money is exhausted, and then turn him out in the cold. The world looks in condemnation on all his undertakings. Should he apply for a position, they shake their heads, and say "he will drink again." From every door he is turned away.

There seems to be no place on earth where he can go and receive consolation. If he goes to Sunday school they gaze at him, and whisper to each other, "I wonder why he came?" If he goes to church he feels like a prodigal, and no one, even there, greets him with a cordial "good morning." Heartsick and almost weary of life, the young man in his sober moments reflects on his misspent life, and there flashes through his brain the thought of a mother. He is ashamed to return on account of his wretched condition—and if he does turn his weary steps homeward, the tempter is likely to beckon him back. * * * * *

In this disjointed chapter, written while recovering from the horrors of drunkenness, I might make mention of attendant evils upon drink. It

is sometimes the gambling hell and the half-clad, painted courtezan, the whited sepulchre, which first allures the youth to drink and consequent ruin. It is often in such places that the wine is free, the beer fresh and foaming, the parlors fine, the music sweet. He sees for the first time in life, perhaps, the mockery of womanhood, and listens to her flattery. At first he is shocked and wants to leave, but as his check becomes flushed with wine, morality leaves his heart. He is finally persuaded to "take a hand;" is allowed to win until excited over success, he stakes and loses all he has. The cordiality becomes contempt; the women frown upon him, and the men are ready to kick him out.

The cold breeze which blows upon his fevered cheek waifs upon the night air the slow and solemn tones of the town clock, one, two, three, four! in the morning. At early dawn of day he staggers to his hotel, and remembers as he enters that he has not even enough left to pay his bill, and those who claimed to be his friends, and who never had left him for an hour, were now behind and perhaps laughing over their spoils. No mother's soft hand is there to smooth his agonized brow; no father's strong arm upon which to lean. Finally, in his wretchedness, he seeks revenge, and goes back. They laugh it off, and tell him all things are fair in gaming. Then, taking advantage of his misery,

they perhaps induce him to become a decoy for other young men of his acquaintance, and steeped in liquor, he goes from misfortune to shame.

I am no fanatic. I differ with good friends in politics, and have represented a political party on the stump in Texas. It is not my desire to bring sectarianism or politics in this book, but suffice to say I believe in the Christian religion, and am a member of the Church—if they did not turn me out lately—but it does seems to me that I would prefer any occupation under the sun to that of selling my fellow-men whisky. I have one or two friends who are bar-keepers, and have met a few clever men in that business, who treated me with kindness when I needed it, for which I am thankful. We find good and bad men in all occupations, but I have seen a bar-keeper in Sunday-school wipe his face on a pure white silk handerchief, pawned for a drink by a poor inebriate, who had experienced better days, and with the name of a broken-hearted wife embroidered in the corner. She shivered in the cold and wept because she had not respectable clothing to wear. I have seen a bar-keeper take an old man's spectacles for a drink, and curse him because he did not have the money. I have seen him accept the wearing apparel of a woman, pawned by a drunken husband, and thinn it was smart. Yes, I have seen him take a Bible, the word of God, as collateral for liquor.

All bar-keepers will not do so. These are only a few incidents—and notwithstanding his mental calibre is light; notwithstanding he parts his hair sleek in the middle and wears a white apron, still he keeps on tap that which wrecks the brightest brains, which desolates the happiest homes, and breaks the gayest and happiest hearts. That which causes poverty—crime—suicide. He sells that which advocates wrong, condemns right; that which is the devil's best friend and God's worst enemy.

He mocks the good and smiles with the bad; he robs of fortune, fame and honor. "Angels turn weeping away, and God upon his throne looks in anger, and hurls a woe upon the hand which putteth a bottle to his neighbor's lips." He has taken from me my all; checkered my life and blotted my future, but he shall have his reward. May the Lord soften his tiger-heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

LECTURE—THE PEOPLE AND PRESS—ROBT. GOSS—TOUR THROUGH THE SOUTH—HOME AGAIN—GO TO TEXARKANA—DREADFUL FORBODING—I LOVE A FRIEND—GOD HELP ME! I FALL—EXPERIENCE IN NEW BOSTON, CLARKSVILLE, HONEY GROVE, LADONIA AND WOLF CITY—GRATITUDE—COLD RECEPTION AT M'KINNEY—MY DREAM—LECTURE—COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

About thirteen months ago I began to lecture. Having suffered so much from the cause of intemperance, I determined to warn others against pursuing the path that led me to ruin. I began lecturing at home and at contiguous towns. A local reputation as a speaker preceded me, and fair audiences were at my appointments, generally brought thither by curiosity. Presently the people and press began to discover, or thought they did, something original about me and my style of talking, and my audiences of tens and hundreds began to expand until they were far into the thousands. Fame, too, began to trumpet me abroad, and I

felt I was also on the road to fortune.

From Shreveport I went to Vicksburg, thence to Batesville, Sardis, Como, Hernando and Memphis, lecturing to fine audiences in each town. At Ripley, where lived my mother and relatives, I was most cordially received. Through Kentucky I made a successful tour, and then started homeward through Arkansas, lecturing in the principal cities through which I passed. At the depots I was often honored with a free carriage, and, on several occasions, with a brass band. Captain Robert Goss, of Sherman, traveled with me a short while. The Captain was a fine elocutionist and frequently entertained us with his humorous imitations. I tried to live a consistent Christian life, which was easy with these good religious influences around me. After the lapse of seven months I returned to my little home, and rested a happy month. Then again I embarked on a lecturing tour, feeling now that I had entirely overcome my former dissipated habits, and began to present the appearance of my former self. I filled several engagements and then went to Texarkana, where I had written the minister to make an appointment, but he ignored my letter. Stopping at the Benefield Hotel that night, an awful thirst came upon for drink. God forgive me, I am either too gay or too sad. I love a companion, a friend, a consoler. While I had no reason to think so,

still I felt that the world had forsaken me. Restless, nervous, I cannot describe my feelings that night in Texarkana. I went to a circus and tried to laugh it off, but the laugh was all in vain. After the circus I walked the streets until two o'clock in the morning. Finally I walked into a saloon—the first time in ten months—then I was doomed. I called for whisky and poured it down. I treated my money away and took in the town. Boarding the cars, I next found myself in the little town of New Boston, where, on account of this debauch, my lecture was a failure. I attempted to speak, but my tongue was so thick that the audience at once discovered that I was drunk. Yes, drunk! Going down the hill, as it is my nature to travel in this condition. I next realized my whereabouts in Clarksville, where the noble Mr. Will Taylor took care of me for several days. God will bless a charitable Christian heart. May the bees weave their sweetest honey for him and corn fields wave their fullest grain. Mr. Taylor, thinking I was truly sober, allowed me to go to Honey Grove. Arriving in Honey Grove on Saturday, I again imbibed too freely and reveled with the wine bibbers. Two kind young men carried me to my hotel, and I was able to lecture in the Presbyterian church Sunday evening, receiving a fair contribution for my address, which amount was wasted in dissipation, mainly at Ladonia.

I will digress here by stating that with all my faults, I am grateful. I love the people of Honey Grove and Ladonia. I may fall and go to ruin, but God will bless them for their kindness. I remember those who gave their hands and picked me up the "seventy times seven." I remember Richardson, Dabbs, the Ashlands, and others, whose names space will not permit me to write. As a matter of consequence I cannot remember all that happened, but am told that I fell down in the pulpit, drunk, in Wolf City, and the people walked out, perfectly disgusted with me. Then I became sick and was confined to my bed. One morning two ministers, Rev. J. B. Nicholdson, and Rev. Mr. Philips came in my room and prayed God to strengthen me and free me from this, the curse of my life. After the ministers had gone a couple of gentlemen in adjoining rooms, who overheard the prayer, rushed in and seemed much impressed with the Christian charity of the ministers. Nicholdson afterward visited several small towns with me, and was instrumental in my reformation again. May the all wise Omnipotent, who rules the destinies of the universe, ever bless them, is my feeble but fervent prayer, and should any one who favored me ever get in want, it will be my pleasure to aid them.

I next visited McKinney, sober—but the ministers had heard of my fall, and some of them

would hardly speak to me. This was one time I deserve credit for not drinking, for I was almost crazed for a drink. I dreamed of whisky. I walked the streets until one o'clock in the morning alone —almost delirious—then I tried again to sleep. I dreamed that I stood in hell and cursed the angels in heaven because they would not give me whisky. Then I made my escape from torment, and was walking through a beautiful shady grove and met my little nephew, who refused to recognize me, because I had been drunk. Then I wandered into a mansion fine, with marble halls and elegant furniture, where sat two beautiful young ladies, whom I recognized as my nieces, but they ordered me away. Then I went up a broad flight of stairs and walked into a double parlor, where I found all of my relatives weeping. I tried to laugh and cheer them, but they told me I must go. Suddenly a sound from above—sweeter than an angel's harp—and, in my vision, I beheld through the window a beautiful woodland scene. Happy children in innocence were playing through the park with temperance banners; the rosy sunset radiant glow was just then painting the western sky in matchless beauty, throwing athwart the heavens streams of golden light, but the enchantment of such a picture only increased my misery. The music from above increased to a sweeter tone, and seemed to call me. I went up higher, where I found a hun-

dred maidens, whose faces gleamed with beauty, such as was not given to the daughters of men, but they ran from my presence, and I was alone, only to view my haggard expression and tattered clothing through tbe large mirrors about the room. Just then the glittering lights went out—only a faint light from the far-off sun fell dimly on the carpet. The piano played a funeral march without the touch of a dainty hand. Suddenly the double doors were rolled back and instead of the maidens there came a hundred witches to mock me. Over their worn and wrinkled faces streamed tangled masses of long, gray hair, their voices came hollow from their toothless gums, and a single eye was peeping from one to the other, as if they wished to chagrin me. They threw me from the window on the streets below, and then they hissed and set the dogs on me.

But morning came, and I met the county judge, who invited me to lecture in the courthouse, which was roomy and comfortable. Gladly I accepted.

I do not intend to give every little newspaper report concerning myself, but copy the following from the McKinney *Mercury*, which explains the first lecture:

THE LECTURE OF HARRY WATKINS AT THE COURTHOUSE MONDAY NIGHT.

The above named gentleman delivered a lecture at the courthouse in this city on Monday night, to

a large and appreciative audience, taking for his theme, "Delirium Tremens." We will not attempt to follow the gentleman in his lecture, the space at our command this week being inadequate to do him anything like justice. More than this, he should have been heard to be appreciated. To say that the lecture was an exceedingly fine one, would but feebly express it. During a portion of his lecture the silence in the courtroom could be almost felt, so intense was it, and the dropping of a pin could almost have been heard. At other times the audience was convulsed with laughter, and thus it alternated from the beginning to the close. Mr. Watkins drew a vivid and startling picture of the phantoms and demons that haunted him while delirious from liquor. He has the faculty of swaying men almost at will, and he uses it with most wonderful facility. No one who has the pleasure of hearing him once, but longs to hear again. But we leave the lecture and pass to another matter.

The fact that Mr. Watkins has relapsed once or twice since his reformation, and gone back to the bowl, is harshly commented on in certain quarters. Thrice John B. Gough, the most noted temperance lecturer of his time, fell by the wayside and went back to his cups after his reformation, but he conquered his old enemy in the end, and lived for years, and died a sober man, respected by untold

thousands of his adopted countrymen.

Luther Benson, another reformed man of marked ability, has fallen a time or two. But Gough, Watkins and Benson fell with their faces to the foe, and arose to renew the battle for liberty from the thralldom which had so long held them. Gough has gone to his rest, and beyond the reach of temptation, and that Watkins and Benson will conquer yet, we firmly believe. The wonder is, that with the thousand alluring temptations that beset their pathway on every hand, that they have not fallen oftener than they have. No man who has not been in the coils of the monster, Rum, bound, hand and foot, with reason dethroned and the sense stupefied from long indulgences, can know how hard it is to abstain. Judge not too harshly, for with what judgment you judge it shall be meted to you again.—*McKinney Mercury.*

HARRY WATKINS, THE REFORMED DRUNKARD—WHAT HE IS DOING—WHAT THE PAPERS SAY.

Harry Watkins, the reformed drunkard, lectured at the O. S. Presbyterian church last night, and will lecture again to-night. His lectures are truly interesting, and he is possessed of extraordinary gifts of eloquence and oratory, and has been termed "the most eloquent man in America." The friends of temperance and all other classes should not fail to attend his lecture at the O. S. Presbyterian church to-night. We clip the following from the

Fort Worth Gazette in its issue of the 4th ult., by its correspondent from Stephenville, which says:

"On last Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock, Harry Watkins, the reformed drunkard, (now) temperance lecturer, lectured at the Baptist church, in this place, to a crowded house. Mr. Watkins most graphically, eloquently and pathetically detailed his experience as a drunkard; said he had been drunk ten years, that he had traveled all over the land, in all styles and manner, that he had spent a fortune in drunkennesss and rioting; that he had been a gentleman, and a tramp and a beggar. He told a tale of woe and sorrow, of shame, misery, poverty and degradation that made the gayest and most thoughtless, sober and thoughtful."—*Sherman Democrat.*

"THE GREAT TEMPERANCE LECTURER"—A SHORT SKETCH OF HIS LIFE IN CORYELL COUNTY SHOWING A FEW OF HIS MANY UPS AND DOWNS.

Harry Watkins, the reformed drunkard and great temperance evangelist, has been a citizen of our town for the past fourteen years. He is certainly the wonder of Texas, and has been called the "wit of the west." He was born of poor parents, near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and began to look out for himself in early life. When a beardless boy, only thirteen, he landed here, without education or money, but was very attractive, and his oddities gained for him many warm friends

and admirers for his personal character. In his nature he was congenial and liberal, full of pluck and energy, and soon began to accumulate. After making a little fortune he contracted the habit of social drinking, which led to his ruin and degradation. He was the most notorious character in all the land; was tried for some crime before every Justice and District court while the name of the desperado was fashionable in Western Texas. On one occasion he met five men in the road and, at the point of his pistol, made one pat and whistle while the other four danced. Dissipation led him on to ruin until he was incarcerated in the Fort Worth jail, where he suffered for some time the hardships of a prison life, was brought back here a prisoner, and released on bound for assault with intent to murder. He was a while a tramp, wandering from town to town, depending on his witticisms and songs for his whisky.

The young man began to realize his condition, sobered up again, became a gentleman, paid up his old debts, and engaged in the mercantile business. His sudden rise and general qualifications was a mystery, even to his intimate friends, as he was never educated, and had no assistance from any one. For two years he was sober, did an extensive business, lived in style and commanded the esteem and confidence of all who knew him, when he again fell and went to utter ruin, was

away from home, penniless, and had delirium tremens some half dozen times.

Some four months ago the young man again returned to the guide of his youth, sobered up and began to lecture, reciting his own sad experience in intemperance, and, be it said to his honor, that he never fails to hold his audience spell-bound, and, with but a short experience and no education, he is called by the leading papers of Texas the eloquent, extemporaneous speaker of America, and on several occasions he has had an audience of three thousand people, and wielded great good in the cause of temperance.—*Gatesville Star.*

CHAPTER XIV.

CURED OF FIGHTING—A SUMMARY IN SORROW.

Doubtless some one will imagine, from previous chapters, that I am a terrible fighter, but not so. I have long since been cured of the fighting disease—having had some half dozen six-shooters, billiard cues, and other articles broken over my head. I have reformed in the fighting line. Should any of my readers be suffering with this complaint, (ambition to fight) if they will try the antidotes I have taken, I will guarantee a permanent cure. Should your desire to fight, after taking the above prescribed dose, not cease at once, try the nippers and get "jugged," and you will never again be troubled. Tar and feathers are said to be fine for young fighters.

I am glad, however, that I am the only prodigal of my name, and, in all my experience, have never been accused of dishonesty; and have assisted fallen humanity every way in my power. I know the world condemns me, but I never intended, when I started out in life, to become a drunkard.

People often ask me why I did so. What a foolish question! Man may have the fortitude to endure any pain, privation or suffering; he may have the courage to charge up to the cannon's mouth, but he has no power to resist this gnawing temptation. When the habit is fixed, it is as hard to break as for "the weary, worn, and thirsty traveler in the barren, burning, waterless desert to pass by a cold, pure spring, that might burst from the gravelly bed of a green oasis, and not stop to quench his thirst.' It is only through the mercy of High Heaven, and through the spirit of Him whose spirit once moved upon the face of the waters. Reformation is almost a miracle.

Life is a failure to me now. It is too late—too much has been wasted in riotous living for me to succeed at anything. Too late! How often, when approaching the summit of the hill, have I fallen! How often, when the little birds were hung out to sing sweetly in their places, when sunshine gladdened approaching day, and blessed with joy all others, have I thought, why did *I* awake? How often have I prayed to die—I cannot tell.

I am now heavily involved. When you look in my face you see the picture of woe, of sorrow, and despair; but such is the fate of an ill-spent life—such the sad fate of the one who tramples under foot the laws of God and nature; but I will

make one more attempt, and then it is finished. If I do not succeed, let me die the death of shame.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing chapters were written several months ago, when I fondly flattered myself I had forever put this cursed vice under foot; when friends had begun to re-gather about me. But just then, in the height of my confidence, I—God help me—fell. Yes, for two months I have been drunk, wretchedly, miserably drunk—have begged my whisky, and sunk to shame and degradation once more.

Will I ever reform? God knoweth.

But, with shattered body and weadened mind from recent dissipation, I can think of others, and, with my trembling hands, write a warning to our young men. Don't begin the habit! It will drag you down; it will drag down the noblest of God's creatures. Ask it for virtue, it will give you vice; ask it for honor, it will give you disgrace; ask it for bread, you will receive a stone; ask it for riches, and destitution will surely come.

It may be that this is the last warning I shall ever pen; that my voice has been raised for the

last time against this great enemy of mankind—that long dissipation and exposure will soon tell fatally upon a weak frame. There is a ray of hope yet left me. I have heard, and really do believe that, by firm trust in Jesus Christ, the horrible habit can be broken. Never yet have I been able—and God forgive me for it—to feel that degree of faith which would be necessary. It shall be mine, though, if constant prayer can attain it. This is my last chance. Human resolution has proved a failure, and I now lift my eyes to Heaven. Christian people who read this tale of despair will surely pray for me.

CHAPTER XV.

CONTEMPLATES SUICIDE—A BEACON LIGHT OF HOPE —METHODIST CHURCH—CHURCH TRIAL—NEED OF SYMPATHY.

One night in December I sat upon my door steps, a broken hearted wretch. For four months I had experienced the horrors of the damned in a debauch. I had been fainting, praying, raving, despairing. I was afraid of every thing; and had a million dreadful apprehensions.

The night previous to this memorable one, when I attempted to sleep, I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at by monkeys, and ugly human creatures. In my dreams I was idol; I was priest; I was worshiped; I was sacrificed. I had done a deed they said, which they all trembled at. I was buried for a thousand years. My dead face was kissed, with cancerous kisses, and I was confounded with unutterable slimy things, and when I awoke I cried aloud, "I will sleep no more."

With inebriates there are no dates. But this

memorable December night, without a date, is written indelibly upon my mind forever, for I had been doubting, dreaming dreams, no mortal ever dared to dream before. In this dark hour I felt myself despised by those I loved; forsaken by the friends of my confidence. O, how I love a friend! and one kind word in these gloomy hours is worth all the world to me; for man, in this condition, is not a man. He is a lost child. Give me sickness, and disease, lightning and tempest; plague and pestilence; famine and battle; but save me from the dreadful fate of a poor inebriate.

No! I will never forget the December night, for I had resolved then to commit suicide, and queried alone over different plans of performing the dreadful tragedy.

When a boy, my father one autumn evening sent me into a large wood lot to look for our cows. Darkness came upon me before I could find the cows. Half frightened, I ran through the woods looking for them, and was dreadfully alarmed on finding an old negro man, who had committed suicide by hanging himself with a strong string, to a dog wood tree. I thought of this,—and shuddered!

In imagination I could see the few who would follow my dead body to its last resting place. I could hear the clods fall faintly upon my coffin lid. In frenzy I shrieked an everlasting farewell,

but no answer came, and not a tear was shed. I imagined the wooden board placed at the foot of my grave, with the inscription written—

"Harry Watkins"

"Died with Delirium Tremens."

Then came thoughts of the future, "Is death the end? Is suicide unpardonable? Can a man be saved if he takes his own life?"

Theorizing over the intricacies of theology, I thought of the Universalist doctrine, but could not have faith in it.

"And fear came upon me, which trembling caused all my bones to shake."

I pictured a torment. A scorching hell with fire and brimstone! The Demons with fiery tongues to burn me forever in lakes of brimstone! and if I committed suicide I would be there in one second. Trembling I arose and walked about the yard with feelings intermingled between fright and sacred sorrow.

O, you coward! hell can not be worse than this, I cried! I will risk the consequences, and like a maniac I walked rapidly to, and looked into a dark cistern. Here my courage failed. This will be a hard death, I thought, and again looked into the cistern. I will take an over dose of morphine and go to sleep forever. For a moment I congratulated myself that I had come to a final conclusion.

The moon beamed and the stars twinkled bright

above me, and it was yet early in the night, when I stood in front of my own cottage door, resolved alas, to bid the world a sad farewell. There were the same mountains, and the same lovely valley at their feet, I had gazed upon in happy, innocent childhood. There were the same meadows and forest lawns, but no living creature was to be seen, excepting the cattle tranquilly reposing upon the verdant hills. As I gazed upon the well known scene, the memories of those I loved in a far away land appeared like a vision before me, and I wondered if they cared for the "wandering boy to-night;" just then the village church bell tolled, and—

I cried aloud, "I am mad! I will sin no more."

Then turning in my agony upward to God I saw a far off beacon light. It was the light of hope. I will walk abroad; old griefs shall be forgotten, for the air is cool and still, and the hills of Coryell are high, and stretch away to heaven; the forest glades are quiet; with the dew I can wash my fevered forehead, and then I shall be unhappy no longer. But hark!—I hear a sound—sound sweet as an angel's harp. It tolls for me again; it is the sound of the church bell. I will go there and find consolation.

So calling all my courage up I bent my feeble steps toward the Methodist church. I am a member of this church, and my father in his life time

was a leader of Walnut Grove M. E. church of Tennessee. Often when a little prattling boy he led me by the hand to Sabbath School.

But Gatesville was only a village and the church cost, I suppose, about eight hundred or one thousand dollars, of which amount I paid about two hundred and fifty dollars when not a member. But then I reflected, I have sinned against my Father in Heaven. I will go there to prayer meetings and the good Christians will pray for, and strengthen me. Blessed Christian charity, I thought, "Though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity I am nothing." Blessed Christian charity, "envieth not, vaunted not itself," is not puffed up, "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked," "thinking no evil," and the glorious church is the "bride of the nation." It is a nursery for fallen humanity. These thoughts strengthened me, I entered the church but my reception was not as I fondly anticipated. In fact it was directly contrary to what I considered the teachings of the Christian religion. They all gazed at me in silence. I saw they had a secret up, and felt out of place, but determined to stay it out; finally the monotony was broken by the minister who said—"well, what are we going to do with Bro. Watkins' case," and I found they were trying me in church for getting drunk.

This was so unexpected that it fell upon me like

a thunder stroke. A few sought to raise themselves high in the estimation of this good community by wrapping in the ecclesiastical garb, and meeting unawares of a fallen brother to Injure him. Mortified, broken hearted, I left.

The bright moonlight had gone; the world was clothed in gloom. The melancholy melody of the little bird in the deep shadow of the suburban forests, and the roar of the river as it meandered around the town could faintly be heard for a moment, only, and then died away in the dismal stillness. In all the East there was no moon now. The long waving brightness had faded dim, and drear and colorless, beneath the vast vague sky. A shiver ran through the flowers and grasses, and the still evening was palpitating only by the throb of an aching heart.

Trembling in the dark and chilly night, unconsciously I sat alone upon the great stone steps of the building I had once owned and occupied as prince of merchants, and wept for the blessed consolations of sympathy. Abandoned by the world, though watched and protected by the all pervading presence of the God who made me, for temptation was removed, the drug store was closed, and a life was spared to yet accomplish good.

* * * * * * * * *

God save the drunkard. When his money is gone the world mocks, and his inferiors refuse to recog-

nize him. "He lies under the weight of an incubus and nightmare; he lies in sight of all he would fain perform, just as a man is forcibly held to his bed by the mortal languor of a relaxing disease, who is compelled to witness injury or outrage offered to some object of his tenderest love he curses the spells which chain him down from motion; he would lay down his life if he might get up and walk; but he is powerless as an infant, and cannot even attempt to rise."

NOTES.

An old chum writes me—

"Dear Harry:" Yours of the 12th just received —glad indeed, to hear from my old pard. * * * * * * * You are mistaken. They never turned you out of church, some of our best citizens ably defended you after you had gone, and, you are still a member in good standing. * * * * * * * * * *

YOUR FRIEND.

* * * * * * * * * *

God gave us different physiognomies; different ideas. The world has about fourteen million population, with as many different expressions of the face. Sentiments of communities are different. One community will applaud, another will hiss at the same story. How strange is human nature! The average man waits and watches to fall in with the popular tide regardless of right. The lowest, meanest, and most degraded sentiment that can prevail in a community (according to my idea) is that of oppressing a fallen brother. It is a

sentiment indicative of ignorance. Such a sentiment must be commanded, not entreated, for we find in such a sentiment none of the refined element in human nature; no sympathy; no love; no charity.

"Garlands of grace" and religious temperance societies have been a blessing to the land, but when a society, either political or religious, meets to take advantage of a brother's infirmities, and thank the Lord we are not as other men, because "we pray," and "we fast," and "we are more holy than thou," they do the cause which they repreent a great injustice, and just such a sentiments existed with the few who sought to expel me from the Gatesville church, because we had political misunderstandings and I carried the majority. From religious hyopocrites or moral tyrants "good Lord deliver us." They are instigators of scepticism.

I was invited on one occasion to address a temperance society, and this society had selected associates for the young ladies. In fact the young ladies signed a pledge to go with no young man who did not belong to this holy order. To the utter astonishment of all present, I told the young ladies to go home and let their parents advise them in matters of that kind, that these old hypocrites would invade the very sanctity of a domestic hearthstone, and the quicker they dropped an ar-

rangement of this kind the better, and they did take my advice. I know there are designing men who use wine to accomplish brutal purposes, but they are too small for a society to notice and can only be reached with a club. Do all you can to encourage morality or any good cause; advise with kindness your companions, and any lady or gentleman will listen to kindness; if not a lady or gentleman, you have been taught from childhood not to associate with them. Do not consider any one a sinner who differs with you in politics or religion, and join no society to select your companions.

I love the ministry; in my darkest hours I go to my pastor to receive consolation, just as a little child would go to its mother for caresses. I unbosom to him my troubles, and he, to me, is a blessing; but a little narrow, contracted "jim crow" preacher with only one idea in his head on "baptism" is to me a very small arrangement. Don't misunderstand me, I mean the exacting, condemning, convicting man, who never fails to curse out his congregation; who usually has a corporal's guard for an audience, and preaches every body into hell who disagrees with him. I mean the little "one Gallus preacher," who has struck a new route to heaven and rides there on the rail of Ism.

It is only through kindness that we can reach or help fallen humanity. The meek and lowly Nazarene taught it.

Wm. Wirt lay beastly drunk on the streets of Washington with the hot sun pouring on his face. A lady in passing, touched with sympathy and kindness, gently placed her handkerchief over his haggard face. Arousing from his drunken stupor, he walked into a bar room and called for whisky; as he raised the poison trembling to his lips, he saw the embroidered name of the fair lady on the handkerchief; and dashed the rum against the floor resolving to drink no more. This impromptu kindness on the part of the lady led to more intimate acquaintance. Keenly she must have enjoyed her position as wife of one of the greatest orators the world has ever known.

Jno. B. Gough said: "There are but few instances in which kindness has been fairly exercised that it has not subdued the enmity opposed to it. Its first effort will not probably succeed, any more than one shower of rain will reclaim the burning desert but shed the dew of its holy influence repeatedly on the revengeful soul, and it may become beautiful with the flowers of tenderness. Let any person put the question to his soul, whether under any circumstances he can resist continued kindness. Good is omnipotent in overcoming evil. I know there are hard cases,—men who will resist and resent every approach; but, from my experience and observation, I believe there are few so hardened but persevering, judi-

cious kindness will touch some spot in the heart; for they are human.

CHAPTER XVI.

AGAIN DESPONDENT—RESOLVES UPON A NEW CAREER —BORROWS TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS—FAREWELL TO HOME—TEN DOLLAR RIDE—SHREVEPORT, LA—FALL DOWN THE EMBANKMENT — KEACHEI — BAPTIST SCHOOLS AND DEBATING CLUB—LECTURE AGAIN—TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS IN TWO NIGHTS—NATCHITOCHES—FALLEN AGAIN—WEST LAKE CHARLES DELIRIUM TREMENS AGAIN—KIND FRIEDS IN WEST LAKE CHARLFS.

Doubtless you will think that I am too confidential and communicative of my own private history. It may be so. But my way of writing is to think aloud and follow my own private humors, rather than much to consider, who is listening to me.

The morning following the church trial and drunk, I walked alone, about one mile from town to Leon River. Seating myself under a large tree, I thought, and prayed, and wept for hours. Those who in days gone by had paid me every ovation, now wagged their heads, and passed me by.

What a mournful minute is that, in which society consummates the irreparable abandonment of a thinking being! Hence I perhaps wrongfully condemned society. I thought of a life of torture, and gloom. I felt that I was growing wicked, and almost condemned Providence as growing impious; I meditated, can man who is created good by God, be made bad by man? can the soul be entirely remade by destiny, and become evil if the destiny be evil? Is there not in every human soul, a primary spark, a divine element, incorruptible in this world and immortal for the other, which good can develope, illumine, and cause to glisten splendidly, and which evil can never entirely extinguish? These are grave and obscure questions, which I will not attempt to answer.

Rebuke after rebuke, kick after kick, had caused me to lose confidence even in my own merit. So now absorbed in thought I was soon unaware of my whereabouts, and thus began to soliloquize:—

I will go to a strange land, and commence a new life, I will never mention the past but look to a bright future, but, no, I haven't any money and do not know where to get it, and I can not travel without means, so I will accept a situation here, however humble it may be, until I am able to go some where and rise in the world again.

After cogitating for some time, I arose, walked

up town, and applied at every store for a situation. Frequently I had reveled away more money in a day, than most of these pea nut stands were worth; but they wouldn't hire me at any price, and didn't have much time to talk.

Such treatment has not only made drunkards and prostitutes but sent men who naturally had good hearts to rob trains. Bad treatment, an insight to human nature, and a betrayal of confidence will cause a man to hate the world and long to get even. But such a spirit is ruinous, and sure death, and we must battle against it. So now, instead of melancholy I felt a resentment. Resolving to do something I next applied to a gentleman for a loan of twenty-five dollars. To my happy surprise he at once handed me a check for the amount and I found one true friend in need. Thanking my friend for his kindness I walked to the depot and got aboard the cars, not knowing where I was going or what I would do.

A large two story residence, painted white, with open green blinds and surrounding balconies sitting high on the summit of a hill, looked sympathetically over the little cottages around the depot. In the rear of this palace stood a great barn with cloud reaching spires. In front were colossal gates painted green, with white cupolas perched on top. Around the premises were lawns, flower gardens, and summer houses enbowered with honeysuckles;

all bowing as servants to the stately mansion. The afternoon sunlight was streaming in at the windows, the lace curtains stirred softly, to and fro, in the fresh breeze, and I faintly heard the wind rustling on the vines as they moaned for my haggard misery; for this was my home erected regardless of cost to suit my own fantastic taste. Alas! it is all gone, for which I hold in exchange, only, rebuke and contempt. The romantic story about this lovely home would make a book much larger than this biography, consequently I leave it for another time. But, who does not love his home? "But it ever so humble, there is no place like home." Gazing in awe upon the well known spot I realized without utterance the true meaning of the *sweet word farewell*; a word called sad, but sweeter than all the world to me because I never had one. No one was there to say farewell. No one shook me by the hand. No one blessed me with a kind farewell; but forsaken by those I loved, I—God help me! I weep as I write it!—was driven alone out in the cold world without even a farewell. He alone can appreciate a farewell who never had one. The author of "home sweet home," never had a home. The orphan weeps when told of its unknown parents; so there I felt within my heart a longing inexpressible for the word sweeter than all the world to me—*farewell*. In this town I had made and lost fortunes, had

given to charity, and assisted public institutions, but not a farewell came.

It is true *Gatesville*, you have been ungrateful to me, still you are my home, and like a child I love you. Within your borders I have played the part of *gentleman and gambler*, *prince and beggar*, politician and merchant. You have called me your *pet*, have paid me ovation and contempt. You owe for the life blood flowing through your veins. Without me you are nothing. Yes Gatesville you are untrue; but I forgive, and love you still, and now—

"Farewell Forever."

The cars moved slowly away. There was the same large oak upon which years ago I carved the name of two fond lovers. There were the same sweet flowers, the same summer house, and I saw at a distance two of my old negro servants. Doubtless they would have said "farewell" had they known "Master Harry" was going. But alas, not a voice was heard, as we moved away the tears poured down my burning cheeks, and my heart throbbed a long farewell, to happiness, farewell to peace of mind! farewell to hope and to tranquil dreams, farewell to the blessed consolations of a once happy home, its memories I "never, never, can forget."

"Spare, spare, the old homestead
'Tis dear to me yet;
The home of my childhood
I never, never, can forget."

"Tickets," the conductor cried. Handing him a ten dollar bill, I remarked that "I would ride it out." "Where do you want to go," he enquired. "Don't care, give me a good ten dollar ride," was my reply.

Sad and lonely I sat unnoticed by the car window, going to—God knows where—. Ten dollars worth at least. We sped rapidly away through a familiar country. The golden afternoon glowed and ripened to redness, and dropped at last out of the sky; the latest light of day quivered on the twilight. The heavens grew purple and faintly green; the evening star came out in its amber haze, and traveled along with us, seeming to twinkle in pity for the disconsolate. I fell into the arms of Morpheus with premonitions of a better future; and was awaked by the noise of a city: Shreveport, La.

'City Hotel!" the bus man bawled and I crowded into the "always room for one more" bus, and soon was registered at the City Hotel without baggage. Familiar faces appeared to me there, several said, "Hello Watkins," and I wanted to get away to a strange land, but could not think of any country that I had not already visited when on a whiz. Unfortunately I was notoriously known in that line.

Four o'clock on the following morning the porter knocked at my room and said, "all aboard for

Keachei." Chilled and despondent I put on my thread bare clothing and took the bus again. The bus man collected 50 cents each from the passengers, traveled a short distance and put us out in the dark. It was yet a mile from the depot. The rain poured. A lady was aboard with a little child, as I had no baggage, (excepting a dirty pocket handkerchief) I offered kindly to carry the child. It was dark and gloomy and we had no lantern. The woman, child, and myself stepped off the sidewalk and fell ten feet below in the mud. The child cried! the woman screamed! but no body hurt; the mud was soft.

Struggling an hour through mud and rain we at last found a large building with not a light in or around it; we presumed it however, to be the depot. No competition with that road. The rain poured, the thunders roared, the lightnings flashed, the baby cried, but it was better than a drunk. Grey morning began to break; the cars came and I took late breakfast at Keachei.

Keachei has two large Baptist schools running in opposition. On meeting an old acquaintance (a college student) I was invited to attend the Friday night's debate, and address the school. Gladly I accepted, and after the speech announced to lecture at M. E. church the following night, where I made a fair impression and received a liberal contribution.

Early in the morning it had turned bitterly cold. A negro boy called at the hotel with hack for depot. After driving a short distance the negro attempted to collect double fare from me; in consequence of which, I knocked him out of the hack with a hickory stick.

I next visited——town, where I met Mr. ——, a great temperance advocate, and at once recognized him as the same gentleman who, ten years ago, was tried and convicted for stealing a pair of pants in Gatesville. I did not say any thing about it there, as I would do him no harm. He however was polite but nervous, and did not attend my lectures. He had been sober all his life. In fact I never saw an habitual drunkard, a natural thief.

Louisiana is a grand State, her people are hospitable, kind, and charitable. Professional actors, and itinerants say that the sympathies of an audience is easier caught in Louisiana than in any of the States, consequently I had the cultivation there to exhilarate me, and made two thousand dollars in twenty nights.

Amony other cities, I visited the old French town of Natchitoches, famous for its age, romance, and history. I believe it is the oldest town in the United States. It was the contemplated Capital of Aaron Burr's empire, so eloquently pictured by Wm. Wirt. It is a Catholic town. The records

in Catholic church date back in the sixteenth century. While there, through curiosity, I attended a grand coon (*or negro*) ball, not however as a participant, but a looker on.

The song and dance of the southern negro is to me always entertaining. Indeed, they are the most faithful friends in the world. Who would have remained at home to care for his mistress, as the plantation negro did during the war? It is true, as a race, he is not equal to the white man intellectually. But slavery was wrong; a fact to which the south is now reconciled, then why do Kansas people talk about sending him back to Africa? His right here, as an American citizen, is equal to that of the white man, and paramount certainly to the Chinaman. As a southern man, I bespeak for my country; we rejoice that we are a government of indissoluble States.

I next visited —— town; and met Mr. ——, a leading temperance man, and amen corner brother in M. E. church, whom I at once recognized as the same gentleman who ten years before had borrowed one hundred dollars from me and left hurriedly between suns, without returning it; consequently, after the lapse of so long a time, he could not have been expected to remember.

Yes, he was a member of the church, better described by our Saviour as "standing afar off, and fasting and praying twice a week." O! he

was pure and holy; said he always voted the right ticket, and often made temperance talks to the Sunday school; he had discovered a new road to heaven, and would have every body to vote and pray in his channel or be damned at once. Sugar would not melt in his mouth. Said his heart was with me, but objected to my lecturing in the church, as, he said they had passed a resolution to allow nothing but home talent, and the gospel pure and undefiled in the house of God. He called me "brother Watkins" and said, I had come at the wrong time, that the people were too busy to turn out to a lecture. * * *

After listening for some time in silent disgust, to his advice, I bid him good morning, and called on the Baptist minister, who kindly received, and invited me to lecture in his church, which at eight o'clock was packed with eager people. But my holy brother wasn't there.

It was not a true Christian spirit, but the more I thought of this holy brother, the stronger my prejudice grew towards him, until at last, I resolved to give him a little individual lecture.

On taking an evening walk the Baptist pastor and I met him in the streets. Politely as possible, under the circumstances, I excused myself from the good minister, called the "holy brother" aside, and gave him a talk about as follows:

Mr. —— "If you don't pay me twenty-five dol-

lars of the one hundred you borrowed from me, *right now;* I will announce to-night from the pulpit, who you are; that you are a thief; and all about you."

Calling the minister up I continued, "If you deny this to be true in the presence of brother —— I will bend this cane over your head just to get our names in the Police Gazette."

It is useless to add that the twenty-five dollars was promptly paid.

Kind reader, I know I did wrong, and promise you not to do so again, but I had been persecuted by such "holy brothers" until I could no longer control my resentment.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Just here allow me digress. I have never seen a church full of resolutions and ordinances that was not cold spiritually, and when you hear of a church trial, you mark it down, the people have not paid the pastor his last year's salary, and he, the poor preacher, wears his long face, and talks isms, until the cultivated class retire.

A school with ordinances, rules, and regulations read every day is of no account. At Santa Ana, Cal., they passed ordinances in the churches to prohibit every thing, and the school children were instructed not to read circus advertisements on Saturdays. I have nothing against these ism greenhorns, but a "big yaller dog" of mine should not attend that little school.

A true Christian spirit is easily imposed upon, but what of that? God blesses the Christian who "beleiveth and endureth all things," and chastises the imposter.

After traveling a month through Louisiana, one afternoon I arrived in the little town of Rayne, announced to lecture at church, where an average fair country town audience gathered at 8 o'clock and I made a fair impression. By your permission I quote the following from the Rayne, La., Arcadia, Sentinel: On last Wednesday evening our people had the privilege of a rare intellectual treat consisting of a lecture on the horrors of delirium tremens by Harry Watkins, a lecturer of a high order of talent. Despite the fact that drizzling rain set in about sundown and continued until a late hour, a large audience assembled at the Methodist Church, and were held spell bound by the lecturer for an hour and a half. The earnestness of the speaker in connection with a happy style of oratory, and a most vivid delineation of the horrors of delirium tremens captivated all hearers. His transition from the humorous to the grave and pathetic was so easy and graceful that many found themselves laughing tumultuously before their tears had dried from weeping. Our people went away delighted, declaring that Harry Watkins was the best temperance lecturer in America. * *

After dismissing the people, a letter was handed

me, the contents of which nearly broke my heart. Kind reader, I know it is impolite to excite curiosity, but as "we all think our troubles the greatest" you will pardon me for not publishing the letter. Take my word for it. I was neither guilty of, or accused of any thing. But the letter bore such fatal tidings of sorrow. I wished the day "might perish, wherein I was born."

Without a thought as to the dreadful consequences I rushed into a saloon and—God help me! I fell. The first drink did not drown my troubles, so with jolly laugh and anecdote I called for another, inviting the bar tender to join me. It was late in the night and no one was there, save the saloon man and I. He was not at the lecture and did not know me, consequently was the companion I sought, and soon we were both intoxicated.

Be not so ungenerous as to let me suffer in your good opinion through my own forbearance and regard for your comfort. No, believe all that I ask of you, namely, that I could resist it no longer—believe it liberally, and as an act of grace, or else in mere prudence, I could not possibly resist it. My moments were numbered; my strife was finished; my vision was closed; I was doomed; I was intoxicated. Oh, Guardian Spirit! Why didst thou forsake me? Glance of eye, thought of man, wing of angel, raving of hurricanes, and speed of lightnings was too slow to have saved me.

Presently sorrow left me. I was exhilarated, delighted, enchanted with sin, for the relapse had not yet come. No God was there, to "frown on the temples of sin," the floors were tesselated with "unrestrained indulgences," the fountains were tossing with wine and joy. The bar-keeper and I were drinking to health and gladness, when the clock struck three in the morning, the cars whistled for Rayne station, and I took a sleeper for—I don't know where, but have a faint recollection of landing in Cedar Keys, Florida.

I cannot tell you much about Cedar Keys. In fact I do not believe I would recognize it again. I must have left there however, for I next found myself in West Lake Charles, La., where the relapse came. In a strange town I took the delirium tremens.

Any man can tell you his hallucinations with delirium so long as he lives. Whereas when simply intoxicated he remembers nothing. About midnight I awoke in a lonely room and wondered where I was. It seemed to me that I lived a hundred years in one night, nay, "sometimes had feelings representative of a millennium, passed in that time, or, however, of a duration far beyond any human experience." I once read of a lady who had fallen into a river, "and being on the very verge of death, but for the critical assistance which reached her, she saw in a moment her whole life,

in its minutest incidents, arrayed before her simultaneously as in a mirror," and so it was with me, forgotten acts of childhood and scenes of later years were all revived.

When a boy, I saw a Grecian monk, and it now appeared plain as life to me, that the same Grecian monk sat by my bed, in his long red gown and red skull cap, his hair and beard was so long that it lay upon the floor. The door suddenly opened and three other monks came in, and sat on the bed around me. They said nothing but whispered to each other, and pointed at me in fiendish glee. After a few moments they slowly withdrew.

Then came sudden alarms; hurryings to and fro; darkness and lights, human faces, faces of the dead, faces that were worth all the world to me, but they only gazed upon me and went away. Trembling I arose and looked out the window, and it seemed that the face of the earth was set out in tombstones, with inscriptions written in gold letters,

In memory of Harry Watkins
Died with Delirium Tremens.

I reflected for a moment that it was imagination and laid down, when the door flew open and innumerable headless devils sprang at me. They were of all sizes, shapes, and colors, some were about the size of a Texas Prairie dog, and only

would bark, but the large ones got up on the bed and mashed me almost to death. The first opportunity I ran out of the room from the devils, and in reality fell into a well. An old negro man assisted me out. Day was now breaking and I saw a store open. With dripping clothing and chattering teeth I could scarcely speak, but managed to make my wants known to the merchant who gave me several drinks of alcohol which I then needed to quiet my nerves. It is useless to describe the horrors that haunted me night after night in West Lake Charles. Suffice it, I am yet alive, but could not stand it again, my constitution is wrecked and I have lost all of the powers of endurance.

I will always remember the people of West Lake Charles, for had it not been for their kindness, I surely would have died. Stranger as I was, they sat up with me and gave me every attention. A mother could not have been more attentive to her own child. It seemed that Providence sympathized with my weakness and placed me in good hands for a purpose. Of course after I was able to walk around I took a stimulant under the direction of a physician for a month. To have taken it away from me, all at once, would have been death. When a man is recovering from delirium he needs stimulants.

Jeremy Taylor conjectures "that it may be as painful to be born as to die." I think it probable;

and, during the whole period of diminishing the liquor, I had the torments of a man passing out of one mode of existence into another.

NOTES BY THE AUTHOR.

By the help of God, I can now promise my readers a final reformation. My only aim in this book has been to point out human nature, and warn the rising young man against the evils which attend a dissipated life. Doubtless some one will consider it an exaggerated experience, but not so. My experiences, if possible, have been ten thousand times worse than I could possibly picture them. The subsequent chapters in part 2, viz.: Experiences through New Mexico, Arizona and California, are founded upon facts, but written in comic style for California papers. Be not so uncharitable as to condemn the truth of previous statements on account of the ridiculousness in what may follow.

PRESS NOTICES.

Throughout the United States a great many criticisms have been passed on Harry Watkins, and truly some unkind ones. Having traveled with him for a considerable time, I presume to know something of his nature, which, without bias or prejudice, is about as follows: Too gay, or too sad, all love or all hate, he speaks as he writes and expresses his convictions regardless of public sentiment, or consequences.

His lectures may be described somewhere between a picnic and a funeral. If he looks at his audience and likes it, both he and the audience fall in love, and he moves them either to laughter or tears at will. On the other hand, should he look at his audience and dislike it, he becomes disgusted and refuses to speak. Destitute of policy, he sometimes too freely expresses himself. However sensitive in his nature, he is *very* sympathetic, and charitable, and makes a warm and liberal friend, never failing to give alms and attention to the fallen.

Harry Watkins is not only a reformed man but a Christian gentleman. His wayward disposition has brought a criticism on his sincerity, being led off easily by those in whom he confides, but, like David, of old, he quickly repents.

I have heard him lecture on many pathetic subjects, in all of which, he appealed to the heart and sympathies, never referring to politics. Though versed high in the intricacies of government and political economy he never uses it in his lectures. To make a long story short, with all his eccentricities and weak points, he may be termed a natural tragedian, and born genius.—E. B. H., *Santa Barbara Independent.*

Harry Watkins, a reformed drunkard of Texas, lectured at the Presbyterian church on last Wednesday evening to a large and appreciative audience, on the subject of "Gambling and Dissipation." His eloquence held the entire house spellbound for nearly two hours, something which no other traveling lecturer has ever done in this town, and we have had many. The common temperance lecturer in comparison with Harry's talk is indeed a frail affair. Harry does not harp on prohibition, politics, nor the old thread-bare theme, temperance. But as a reformed drunkard and gambler he simply relates his own experience; which is most horrible, almost beyond the imagination of those who have never traveled in the same boat.

He gives a bit of his experience starting from his first drink, wending his way down into the deepest and lowest dives and gambling dens of the nation, until suddenly he is attacked with the delirium tremens; here he sees everything terrible, he is in frightful agony. He occasionally soars to the sublime, he walks the golden streets of the heavenly city when suddenly he is transmitted down into the deepest pits of hell, where he views green eyed monsters and the whole world turns into demons, before his eyes of imagination. Perhaps there is no other man on terra firma that can equal the word picture of this hellish road as related by Harry Watkins, who has been there.

In connection with Harry's lecture our people were entertained by E. B. Higgins, formerly of the Higgins Bros., Chicago, famous over the world as singers, and his son Fred, who has no equal as a whistler. Fred entertained the audience to its highest musical pitch with his comic songs and imitation of the mocking bird. Fred is looked upon as having a wonderful musical mouth. He fills the house with song and whistle. He amuses and entertains everybody. Harry's lecture and this musical treat was a grand feast for our citizens.

At the close of the lecture Harry invited all who wished to have them stop on their way back from San Luis Obispo to their feet. Like an electric movement the entire audience found them-

selves in a standing position.— *Santa Maria Times.*

CHAPTER XVII.

START FOR CALIFORNIA—DEMING, N. M.—THE SINGLE SPARTAN SOLDIER—COWBOYS—DEMING GAMBLERS —EMIGRANT TRAIN — TUCSON — YUMA — MOJAVE DESERT—CALIFORNIA—THE HALF HAS NOT BEEN TOLD—LOS ANGELES — OLD FRIENDS AND NEW SIGHTS.

I left West Lake Charles with San Francisco as my aim, hoping to get away from acquaintances. Nothing very curious happened until I reached Deming, New Mexico. Stopping off a day and night in San Antonio, I went through the old Alamo building, about which so much has been said in history and romance. On enteringthe building, a serious looking old Texas veteran adjusted his spectacles wisely and looked at me for a moment and said, in a soft but commanding voice: Register your name.

After the preliminaries, the veteran took a drink of water "opened his mouth," and taught me, saying:

Travis, Crockett, Bowie and Milane all fell

here; pausing for a moment to study the sentiment of his audience, he continued: 182 Texans bravely struggled for our Independence against 5000 Mexicans here, and had it not been for circumstances unavoidable, no doubt, sir, we would have gained the victory. We killed 1800 Mexicans before our ammunition was exhausted. * * * Here he rehearsed to me separately the life, character, anecdotes, and death of those who occupied the Alamo, pointing out the very spot, where each one died, for the liberty of his country.

For an hour I was held, beautifully, spell bound by the old man's eloquent descriptions. In fact, in this trained speech, he had the history of Texas on the end of his tongue, but, as he waxed into the pathetic, I became wearied of the sameness in his voice and gestures. Determined however to go through, if life would permit, I looked him square in the face as he continued.

The single Spartan soldier was left to bear home the fatal tidings from Thermopylæ, but from the Alamo not a Texan here was left to tell the tale," (I answered, "Yes Sir.") "Brave, noble, and true Sam Houston returned good for evil by sparing the life of Santa Anna."

Yes sir, said I.

"And the story of our Independence," (said he) "reads like an ancient fable. Baptized on the San Jacinto, nearly a semi centennial ago, in the

glorious cause of freedom, our forefathers scarce fifty thousand strong, but armed with right, won a decisive victory against eight million of people."

Oh yes! says I.

This worthy guide, is the right man in the right place; he never tires, but takes pleasure in telling the same memorized story twenty times a day. My room at the Manger hotel was near the Alamo, and all during the day, I could hear his voice ring out, to tourists passing through the Alamo: "The single Spartan soldier was left to bear home the fatal tidings from Thermopylæ,"

It was impossible to leave my hotel without passing the Alamo, and each time I passed, his melodious voice rang out: "The single Spartan soldier was left to bear home the fatal tidings from Thermopylæ."

Silence for a moment, and the tourist answered, "Yes sir."

San Antonio is a city of plazas, beautiful Spanish girls, hot tomales and beer gardens. Late at night, I retired to my lonely room. Raising the window to gaze upon the broad blue sky, and inhale the gentle breezes of spring time, my attention was attracted to a light in the Alamo, and I heard a voice ring out clear and distinct: "The single Spartan soldier was left to bear home the fatal tidings from Thermopylæ."

In wild despair I rushed down stairs and

requested from the clerk, a room on the opposite side of the building, where I sweetly slept and dreamed that "the single Spartan soldier was left to bear home the fatal tidings from Thermopylæ."

After traveling over Western Texas and Mexico, passing through the old Mission. and reviewing the Mexican soldiers at Del Norte, and doing something, I will never (for humanity's sake) be guilty of again; namely, attending a bull fight, I at la t struck the famous town—Deming, New Mexico; famous for its concentrated essence of pure rascality. Deming does not present the appearance of a frontier, cowboy town; entirely different. Deming is the town a cow boy would rejoice to take in.

By way of illustration, I will try to explain. In 1879, I lived in the Pan Handle with the cow boys. For months, we did not see a woman, or child, in consequence of which, the boys grew rough; that is, when we boys did go to town, it was a shame, if we did not get drunk, roll ten pins, run horse races up and down the streets, fire off pistols, and tell the people "to hide away," for we had come. We would ride through the stores and saloons for a change, and, with a Comanche yell, swear that we "had crossed Chisms trail and gone wild." "Wild and woolly, and hard to curry." "Got great long hair on my teeth" is a cow boy expression. It was every body's religion to get

all the money possible out of the cow boy. If the town Marshal could arrest one, he was called a dandy, and promoted to a high office.

I will state by way of parenthesis, however. that he was seldom promoted. When the cow boys came, he had business matters to look after in the country, and left the town in charge of the cow boys. But when the boys returned to camp, they were sick, and penitent, and would talk about a mother and sister in the States. Perhaps, if a church had been within two or three hundred miles, they would have joined it. The average cow boy is all friend or enemy. Any one is welcome at his camp to stay so long as he chooses.

But Deming was entirely the opposite, when I looked at "her," I longed to close her up. I can neither describe my feelings or the town. Dante described hell, but, he would have failed on Deming. I know of no better appellation than h——l on earth. Along the front street were signs over the doors, such as: Alice, Cora, Mollie, Black Eyed Susie. * * *

I have read Mr. Beecher on gambling; have looked at the gambling dens from New York City to San Francisco, from Washington Territory to San Diego, on the seas, and in foreign countries, but never before felt so indignant over a game of chance.

A saloon answered as hotel office for ladies and gentlemen.

A painted female was playing on the piano. Around her stood a half a dozen others, robed in peculiar attire, who did not seem to enjoy the music, but frowned and looked as if they had just landed in torment and did not know how to get away.

In this house of darkness, and fierce faces, gleaming with the fire of fiercer hearts, sat four men around a table. Pale, watchful, though weary, their eyes pierced the cards or furtively read each other's faces.

Understand me, they were not shrewd, but hideous, ghastly, horrible! They never spoke or whispered, but continued the game in silence. Occasionally a hard faced gambler would arise from the table, walk up to the bar, motion for whiskey, drink alone and return to the game. No one treated.

Hours thus passed away. At length they rose without words; some, with a satisfaction which only made their faces brightly haggard, scraped off the money; others, dark, sullen, silent, fierce, move away from their lost money. Those who had won drank alone. Those who had lost stood back.

The cow boy treats, and talks a great deal, but the Deming gamblers *did not.* The Deming gambler uses the meanest way of doing the dirtiest

thing. The victim's own partner was sucking his blood, by cheating and robbing him in silence.

Sunday is same as week days, only business appears some better.

Silver City is fifty miles from Deming, and seems more animated, but it is tough. The gamblers in Silver City occasionally speak to each other, and may perhaps have a drop of human kindness left. I do not believe New Mexico will ever become a State. Of course, like Sodom and Gomorrah, a few respectable families live there; but, in the main, they are an illiterate, uncouth set; incapable of self government.

Weary with New Mexico, I boarded a crowded emigrant car for Arizona. Americans, French, Chinese, Dutch, Malays, in fact, a representative of all parts of the Union and the nations, were on the cars. They smoked, eat, slept, and spit all together on the floor. Men, women, and children slept in heaps; and I was permitted to inhale the sweet fragrance from the feet of many nations. Old socks were hung up to dry. The children cried. The American women sung, "by your baby." I could not understand what the Dutch women said; guess it was good.

It is best to travel on an emigrant car when you are broke, that is, if you live to overcome the first whiff.

Emigrants see everything, hear everything, and

run out at every little depot to enquire the distance to the next town.

Late at night overcome with fatigue I fell into the arms of Morpheus and dreamed that the single Spartan soldier was left to bear home the fatal tiding from Thermopylæ."

In the morning after the birds had finished their matins, when the sun had advanced full high, and the dew had gone from the grass, strangled by a sock I awake in Tucson.

A few moments ago I said Deming was h——l on earth, but now, I have found a real h——l. No earth about it. Tucson is h——l No. 1.

Walking up town I was greeted by the blazing sun at the rate of a 110°, while yet the perspiration was pouring from me, I registered my name on a two bit blotter at Palace Hotel, and was shown to my room by a Spanish chambermaid, who remarked, in broken English, that it was a "nice cool morning."

In the language of Thos. Jefferson, Pocahontas, or some other great man, it sometmes in the course of human events becomes necessary to "hustle," and without a nickel in Tucson, it became necessary with me.

After considerable effort, I prevailed on the editor of a four column daily to announce "Harry Watkins, the wit of the West, will deliver a comic lecture to-night. Doors open at 7:30, stage fright

takes place at 8." * * About two hundred people, I suppose, came out, mainly foreigners, who could not speak English, or understand a word I said. The truth is, they were fooled out to this lecture. They thought a comic lecturer was some peculiar kind of animal. When I began to talk, I could see they were waiting in suspense for something. I told some regular side splitters, but they never cracked a smile. They were waiting for the monkey to come out. Several Chinamen left. The monotony of the occasion was broken by a Mexican in the audience who said: ¿Donde esta el animàl que nos hiba muestràr? (or where is the animal you advertised to show; we are waiting,") and the evening's entertainment was suddenly brought to a close.

Returning to my hotel, with feelings intermingled, between fear and stage fright, I lit a cigar to quiet my nerves, and took a seat in the front corridor. Two Mexicans engaged in a row on the streets attracted my attention. I was satisfied, from general manuevers, that they were taking the name of the Lord in vain; finally one Mexican with a heinous look, drew a large knife and cut the head of his antagonist entirely off. This, indeed was a brutal affair. The blood streamed, and the headless body of the poor dead man dropped on the street.

The citizens paid but very little attention to so

small an affair, except one miner, sitting by, remarked that it was a "d—n clean job." Chinatown in San Francisco, is Paradise compared to Tucson.

Arizona wants the reserved right of local self government, but Uncle Sam is too smart for that.

Disgusted with Tucson or h——l No. 1, I sought a better land. On the cars I dreamed about the Mexican with his head cut off. Early in the morning at the dawn of day, when all nature was smiling, while the birds were singing to gladden approaching day in some other country, for they didn't have any birds in Arizona, while the maidens were yet sweetly dreaming, and the honest old farmers were bawling out for "Sallie to get up and get breakfast," I awoke in Yuma.

O! Yuma, sweet Yuma! In the language of Eli Perkins, the boss liar of the universe, "You are a dandy." O! that I could tell of thee with the pen of a De Quincey.

When first I saw thee, moonlight and the timid tremblings of the dawn were blending; and the shading was brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight silvery mist, motionless and dreamy; that covered the woods and fields. But they covered the woods and fields in some other land, for sweet Yuma, you had none. No beautiful glades where shafts of golden light pierce the thick foliage of the stately trees, and lay with

the dancing shadows on the grass, around, or about thee.

You are a barren, burning waterless desert. You have no "cold pure spring bursting from the gravelly bed of a green oasis," where the weary traveler can quench his thirst. O, no, Yuma! when the traveler strikes you, he must "keep a gwine" or starve.

Deming is hard, Tucson is harder, Yuma is hardest.

The minister finds degrees in Heaven and h——l, so it was with these towns. The thermometer that morning in Yuma stood at 120°. Another chambermaid, showed me my room and remarked that it was a pleasant morning. I assented by a gentle nod. Didn't open my mouth for fear my tongue would catch fire.

The population of Yuma consists of 1450 Indians, 350 gamblers, 300 convicts, and 1 gentleman. Arizona penitentiary is in Yuma. I do not suppose however, they would send the Mexican to the penitentiary for the trifle of cutting a man's head off. I heard of no witnesses being subpœnaed.

As you have read so much about this famous town, I will not weary you with a long story. Several years ago an unfortunate citizen of Yuma died and went to torment, and had to send back for his blankets to keep warm, on account of the sudden change of climate. I traveled through a por-

tion of Arizona several years since, and found a very nice town; Phœnix.

Across the Colorado river from Yuma, is the great Mojave desert, not inhabited, but several hundred miles wide. Strange, this great desert was once a sea. It takes a rapid locomotive all day to cross it, during which time you can enjoy the dust and sand. The cars stop for dinner in the middle of the desert, and it is a great pleasure to see the tourist blow, and puff, and swear to travel no more, and pay 75 cts for a first class 10 cent meal.

Away we fly for California, to "love among the roses." No tongue can tell, or pen can picture beautiful California. After leaving the hot desert, we passed through orange orchards, alfalfa fields. All sorts of fruits and flowers were blooming and ripening, the grape vine twined around the hill side. Shady walnut groves with clear sparkling streams of water passing through the center. Lakes, silvery expanses of water. White cottages embowered with flowering shrubs, so chosen as to unfold a succession of flowers upon the walls, and clustering around the windows through all the months; and such pomp of cities and palaces as was never beheld by the waking eye.

California, "I have heard of thee," but "not half had been told me." The fruit, ruddy and golden on the tree, seemed to laugh at the passing tourist.

The rivers foaming and fretting clear beneath the green boughs spreading above; the blue sky over all appeared like a dream to me. The sun sank to rest beneath the waters of the great Pacific. The pale moon beamed upon the path of night. The bells were ringing. The gongs were rattling. The lights were glittering; and the brakeman cried aloud:

"Los Angeles."

People were thick as bees. Broadway is quiet compared to Los Angeles. Policemen were busy clearing the way. Emigrants were herded like so many cattle. Men, women and children were wedged in together. The city was light as day. Electric lights every where. Bands of music; whistling engines; rattling vehicles all blended their voices together. Cries of look out for pick-pockets, (perhaps from a pick pocket) but no body could move for human souls.

In the zenith of excitement a voice rung out clear above the rest, "Hello Harry!" and I recognized two old friends, W. A. Dabbs and S. D. Crittenden.

My friends showed me the sights of the city, and entertained me a week. We looked through some sort of a glass at Mrs. Langtry, I had rather look at her than to hear her, would give her a dollar extra to stand still and let me look at her. We heard Mr. Wendel lecture and attended the read-

ings of the notorious fraud who travels on his father's reputation—"Chas. Dickens." This all cost money.

And then we saw Salvation Armies; old bald headed men, and grey haired women flying on velocipedes. This was free. In Texas, it would have cost a dollar a seat, to a packed house. I liked it much better than the Dickens readings.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HIS WILDLY ENTHUSIASTIC LETTER TO AN OLD PARD CAPTURED BY AN INDEPENDENT REPORTER.

Gatesville, Texas, June 15, 1888.—Dear Harry: I learned through the newspapers that you are in San Francisco. Please write me how you like the climate of California; what are the advantages there for a young man with small means and large experience? Would an old bachelor stand any show for a wife? Write me all about it. * * *

Your Friend, JNO. ——.

THE REPLY.

SAN MARCOS HOTEL,
Santa Barbara, Cal., July 5, 1888.

Dear John: Yours of the 15th prox., addressed to me at San Francisco, was received here to-day. No, John, I am not in San Francisco, but in beautiful Santa Barbara, and am delighted to give an old chum all information possible as regards this fair land.

When I arrived here and gazed around me an impression was made that, to say the least, was

lasting. Santa Barbara to me is the favored spot —the garden of the State, and the Paradise of the universe. "No clearer and bluer sky ever spread over the fair land of Italy than is canopied over Santa Barbara."

Pick up the Associated Press dispatches and read to a Native Son of the Golden West of the one hundred and sixty-nine deaths in one Eastern city alone, from sun strokes, in twenty-four hours; and he can not realize it, for it is neither hot nor cold here. Tell him about the blizzards in Kansas, and the vast herds of sheep and cattle frozen on the prairies of Texas; and it interests him like a fable.

You ask about the climate. I might tell you about the climate of San Francisco or Los Angeles, but can not give Santa Barbara its real merit. Go in your imagination and roam among the palmy groves of Japan; love beneath the banyan shades of India; sing and dance and dream of naught but love beneath the soft cerulean skies of sunny Italy; ride in the gondolas of Venice; stand on the sunny slopes of Spain and breathe an atmosphere that tints with purest blue the domes. And then return to America and find here the world's Eden—Santa Barbara. Here the birds sing, the flowers bloom, the hills are mantled in green, and nature is wreathed in smiles even at the dawn of the new year.

This evening, sitting in the library of the great San Marcos Hotel, I look out upon the broad ocean peacefully resting in its fathomless bed, and enjoy the slight breeze, balmy with the breath of the orange and magnolia.

Come along, John, and bring your experience with you! This is the place to make or lose a fortune. Property, like a bale of cotton, is worth so much every day. Life is too short! Leave that drouthy country and come to a haven of rest. Walk a few paces with me and see the "ocean gently laving the whlte, sandy beach, the islands looking the very picture of peace and contentment, as they rest on the quiet bosom of the grand old Pacific."

John, I would advise you to come at once.

I can walk a few hundred yards and see one of the largest grape vines in the world, the stem of which is fourteen inches in diameter, I can taste all the fruits known to-day to the tropical or temperate zones. I can walk through gardens laid out in broad avenues, shaded by immense trees, and see hedges of camellias, blooming red and white, while you are freezing there. I can take a seat under a tree in the yard of this magnificent hotel, that spreads its sylvan shades over the green grass and imagine for a moment that I am king of the universe, while you have a sun stroke there.

A few days since, as the rosy sunset blushed like the cheek of a maiden, a beautiful Spanish girl led me to the side of the sea shore, where we watched the landing of the Santa Rosa with a thousand soldiers, come to spend their vacation in the home of the brave and the land of the free.

I can now hear bells ringing, gongs rattling, summer cars running, bands of music playing, and the thump of a piano accompanied by the voice of a sweet lady in the parlor.

Yes, John, I would advise you to come at once. If you have not the money to buy your ticket, take a nigh cut through the woods afoot. I will meet you on the road with a brass band and a dollar in money.

The more I look at this city, the better I like it, John. I can walk down stairs and behold a street two miles long paved with asphaltum as pure and white as marble. I can see a salvation army within twenty steps of a Wizard Oil Company, both bawling away in competition. It is all free, and I like it because it is free. If a man has merit in him here he succeeds. To be some great man's great grandson amounts to nothing here. Bring along true merit with you and you will get there. This is the place where innocence is equity and talent is triumph, and where the exile from every land finds a home where his

youth may be crowned with the unmolested hope of a glorious immortality."

This is a cosmopolitan city.

The people having come from all parts of the Union and nations, none is asked aught of his religion, his politics, or his ancestral blood. While churches spire the country road, still you can join or not join the one you choose, no ism here. You can holler either for Cleveland or Harrison and not get knocked down, and if you are a good runner you may "fetch" a little Prohibition squeal and not get egged or jugged.

Come at once, John, we will dine at California's leading hotel, (the San Marcos) and have strawberries in December. We will walk through gardens sweet with roses, and through semi-circular lawns bordered at each side by large old lime trees, arching over like aisles of a cathedral. We will sit upon the grass fresh and green, where the tender hues of spring never fade into autumn brown, and talk of gold and heaven; forgetting that we ever had to draw meal from the State of Texas to keep from starving.

* * * * * * *

Yesterday, John, was the Fourth of July, and you should have been here.

Twelve thousand people lined both sides of the streets to witness the grand parade; a parade more majestic than a New Orleans exposition, or Phila-

delphia centennial. It was not yet eight o'clock; the air crisp with the youthfulness of a delicious morning, and the sea was only beginning to sparkle in tender sunshine, when I stood upon the house top and watched it pass.

There were thousands dressed in uniforms. Col. Shafter's regiment wore tan-colored leggins, and marched up the streets by platoons; the colors flying, the bands playing and the muskets glistening in the sun, made a spectacle worth your walking from Texas to see, John.

On the grounds I heard a dozen or more speeches on the Declaration of Independence. Some of the speeches were good; some approached the eloquent, and some told the same old story about the American eagle. The "Sword of Bunker Hill," sung alone by Mr. Beers without accompaniment was worth a dollar a seat, but I heard it free. And the Red, White and Blue rendered in the sweet voice of the lovely and fascinating Miss Daykin, thrilled my soul with emotion, such as I had seldom experienced before. John, don't fail to come! Your old pard. HARRY.

P. S.—You ask if there is any show for an old bachelor to get a wife here.

I think so, there is no accounting for the affections of a woman in this country, several of them are stuck after me! Bring your false teeth and wig and I will see you through.

CHAPTER XIX.

HE EMPLOYS A LAUGHER AND A WEEPER—THE LATTER TAKES THE CAKE.

Human nature is a strange arrangement. If you don't believe it try the part of a comic lecturer. At Lordsburg, Texas, I addressed an English audience and told yarns, regular side-splitters, for two hours; yarns gathered around the world and practiced on before the glass, for months; still they never brought the twinkle of an eye or the crack of a smile; indeed it appeared like a funeral. You could have heard a pin drop, so intense was the silence. After dismissing the audience I became alarmed for fear an egg party might be arranged out doors, and walked unnoticed in a crowd of ladies, but never heard an expression concerning the comic lecture, save from one old woman, who remarked that she "believed that that lecturer was crazy."

In Deming, New Mexico, I delivered a pathetic lecture, and told about the dear departed and death bed scenes, calculated to bring tears from a

stone. But a slight grin and look of enquiry at each other was all the exhilaration I received from that loving people. I was satisfied my lectures were good, because my mother always said I was the coming prodigy.

Unfortunately no one else ever noticed any prodigy about me.

So now, away out in California, without friends, money or any other vocation, save that of an unsuccessful lecturer, it became necessary to make a grand change. What shall I do for appreciation? I soliloquized. Seized with a thought, quicker than greased lightning, I rushed to the Independent office and advertised: "Wanted a partner," an elocutionist, a man or lady who can laugh whether he or she feels like it or not. None but the experienced need apply.

After pacing the streets until a late hour in the night, restlessly awaiting the results of my advertisement, I retired to my room in the San Marcos Hotel and dreamed; that a thousand maids with arms like Aurora's and smiles like Hebe's were imploring me for the position. Generously, I employed them all, and then joyous laughter rang far out in the night air. Ah, sweet malds, how lovely they were, dancing in happy dreamland with me, amid music and incense, and blossoms from forests; amid natural caroling and the echoes of girlish laughter.

I lectured at Burton Mound. A gate fee of five dollars per head was charged, yet standing room could not be obtained even in the ten acre lot. My receipts were something over a hundred thousand. My maids were all around me and laughed a sweet mermaiden laugh, at the simplest thing I told, which was caught up by the vast assembly, and echoed far away to the island of Anacapa. The everlasting gates of summer were thrown wide open; and on the beach of the ocean, tranquil and verdant as a savannah, we sang, and danced, and loved, and laughed away.

After a few lectures I made millions untold, and married separately, collectively, and individually, my thousand laughing maids; (it took three days to perform the ceremony.) And then we sailed, far away to Anacapa Island, of which I was King. There amid wooing gales of domestic happiness, I built a large laughing temple, (something like King Solomon's) and passed a decree, that no man, save I, should ever come there.

A beautlful little Queen came to see me, (something like the Queen of Sheba) and brought me jewels, and gold, and said not half had been told her; then the queen and my thousand maids all blessed me with a kiss, and laughed, and when I awoke I laughed aloud—

"It's all a dream!"

I hurriedly dressed and walked down stairs with

feelings I can not well describe; something between a laugh and disappointment. On entering the crowded dining room, a gentlemen with bald head and chin whiskers, elegantly dressed in a paper collar and shoe fly cravat, accosted me with a broad grin on his face and said:—

"Good morning, sir! are you Mr. Watkins?"

"Watkins is my name."

"Fred L. Higgins is my name, better known in Santa Barbara as the boss laugher of the universe, sir, ha! ha!"

"I'm glad to meet you, Colonel—just going in to breakfast, won't you join me?"

The Colonel nodded a thank you and continued: —"I notice from the evening paper, sir, that you want an elocutionist; a professional man of learning, sir; a man mirthful and ridiculous, ha! ha! A man merry, joyous, happy, lively, gay, vivacious, sprightly, sportive, sir; who can bring the house down—in other words, a patent laugher, sir, ha! ha!"

The guests in the dining room gazed at us and smiled, (for a moment profound silence), then I raised my eyes and caught the Colonel's smile, and smiled in return, to which the Colonel replied:

Ha! ha!"

To which I replied, aside, ha! ha!

Several ladies tittered. The Colonel roared! Then I roared! And we all roared! O, he was a laugher from Laugherville.

He rattled the windows, and upset the butter laughing. He broke up breakfast, knocked down the stovepipe laughing. We arose to leave the table but couldn't walk for laughing. We caught each other around the neck and laughed until the dining room shook for an hour after we left it.

"You are the right man," I tried to say, but could get out nothing but "ha! ha!"

To which he replied "ha! ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! ho! ho!' until the poor man fainted with laughter in my arms. Fond hopes were now blighted. He was the man I had been looking for.

Gazing with sadness too intense for words into his pale, sweet, smiling face, I could see millions!

"A drink of brandy will save him," some one suggested, and before I could reach his cherry lips with the great quart bottle, he sweetly opened his eyes and laughed again. After emptying the contents of the quart bottle, he was fully restored to consciousness, and we were partners.

Only one thing was needed now to make my lectures a grand success, namely: A weeper, a man who could cry, weep, mourn and lament at will; this combination would make us a grand success, and Colonel Higgins suggested the name of his father for this high and exalted position.

Scene 2. The great town clock had not tolled five; the sun was yet high above the mountains, and the little birds were only beginning to warble

their evening notes, when a carriage drawn by two beautiful dapple greys called at the San Marcos for the author of these historical facts. In this carriage sat two distinguished gentlemen—Col. Fred L. Higgins and father. The first sight of the Colonel's father thrilled me with a shudder such as I had experienced in innocent childhood, passing through a graveyard after dark. I scented a fortune in the adventure, however, and shook him cordially by the hand.

After the introduction and tears, the old man recited to me a bit of his history. For forty years he was chief undertaker in Shreveport. His health failing, he was appointed chief mourner during the yellow fever epidemic. Business becoming dull, he drifted in the course of circumstances to Santa Barbara, where, on account of the distressingly healthy condition of this country, he had met with financial reverses and was glad to get the position as weeper from me. He was related both by consanguinity and affinity to Thomas Jefferson and Alexander the Great. His son, (Colonel Higgins) inherited his laughing qualities from his grand ma, (Mrs. Thomas Jefferson) and his own individual weeping propensities came directly from his grand-pa, (Alexander the Great), who wept because he couldn't find other worlds to conquer. Before the interesting conversation could be terminated we were at Montecito,

greeted by a cheerful audience.

According to previous arrangements, we took seats together on the stage; the Colonel on my right; the old man on my left. It was privately agreed that a wink from my right eye, was the sign for the Colonel to laugh; and a gentle raise of my left hand, was for the old man to cry: After the preliminaries, I arose and commenced in the ridiculous as follows:—

"Fellow Citizens:—The American eagle flopped his wings and soared aloft, and soared aloft!"—[a slight pause] I looked witty and continued—"Fellow citizens, I once was ignorant as you are, but look what education and the American eagle has done for me." Here nervously I close my right eye; but no response, my laugher was making eyes at a Spanish girl in the audience. Seeing that a whopper was necessary to bring a laughter, I continued—"What was I, Fellow Citizens, when the American eagle was no bigger than a bandana handkerchief and the star spangled banner splattered all over with blood? Wasn't I thar; and wasn't I the first man to holler, strike for your country and your homes? and while you struck for your country; didn't I strike for home? You bet! In the excitement of the moment instead of closing my right eye, I unthinkingly raised my left hand, and the old man cried like his heart would break. O, he was a cryer from cryerville.

There was weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Quick as possible, I closed my right eye on the Colonel, who brought a sickly laugh; but the old man was too much for him, cried him down, and refused to be comforted. The audience was in tears, and what under the heavens could I do but fall down on his neck and weep also?

HARRY.

P. S. If the old man don't cry himself to death, in six months I will be worth a fortune.

CHAPTER XX.

HARRY'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS SWEETHEART AT SAN MARCOS HOTEL.

The Ups and Downs of an Ill Spent Life is finished; so now I want a painter to sketch a scene for me. I want nothing solemn, majestic, masked by impenetrable mysteries, with melancholy pines in the illimitable solitudes of the forest, as did Geo. Egbert Craddock. No Cumberland range bleak and bare with leafless trees and frowning cliffs.

I want none of the divine pleasures of a winter fireside with warm hearth rugs and curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor, while the wind and rain are raging audibly without, as did De Quincey.

Neither do I care for the unpretending cottage of a scholar populous with books, as Victor Hugo; but I want a painter to come in reality before the public into whose private ears I have been confidentially whispering my confessions—

Hark! my fair Electra, you are here; bless me

with an evening kiss and draw the sketch. Paint a golden moon in the purple dusk and let the world be sweet. Paint the stars twinkling in the liquid air to bless mankind with joy, and let a clear blue sky be canopied over Santa Barbara. Let the grass be green, the flowers blooming, and the birds singing. Make the roses bountiful and large and sufficiently red to make a spot on the planet Mars and imagine it the month of May, but I will whisper in secret, lest a Greek might hear and this statement be discredited, "Fair Electra it is the 15th of December."

Draw now in the midst of this scene a Palace. Let your imagination be vivid and decorate it with every romantic embellishment of fancy. Adorn the halls with ancient portraits; open wide the parlor doors, and let the chandeliers of jet spread a golden light over the velvet carpets. Environ it with broad piazzas and great pillars of marble gazing peacefully at the ocean below. Let its domes tint blue in the moonlight, its flags float softly in the breezes and write in golden letters high on its pinnacle—San Marcos Hotel. There, my fair Electra, you have a portion of the building. Draw now for me a beautiful garden in which is produced all the fruits that man can desire for its servant. Make a great tree as an island in the centre of the garden, and spread its sylvan shades over 500 guests comfortably seated in Sedan

chairs. Let it all look less like earth than heaven. And crown the enchantment of the scene, painting the Queen of all the party, perfumed in Myrrh leaning silently against the great tree. Paint her cheeks rosy with the freshness of youth; her arms white and bare, and give her an expression of childlike frankness—the loveliest young woman for face and person in all the land. Give her a hundred suitors, let them love her—love her wisely, and be vigilant over her deportment. Let Baron and Munchausen watch and woo her for a smile. Name her May, or, will say, sweet May. Draw the Ulysses of the brigade, the genius of all the land by her side. Let him tenderly and respectfully raise her little hand to his lips and cause her to understand that he would like to rank as No. 10 or 12—name him—yes name him Harry—Ah, there!—Fair Electra, don't get jealous; but let her cheeks redden like the rosy sunset as she soils the lapels of his new Prince Albert coat with her golden hair and sweetly whispers you are No. 1.

* * * * Please excuse these tears.

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Mr. Snyder is a hospitable, whole souled man, and knows how to make his guests feel at home, and to touch the little weak points in human nature; for instance, he introduced our party to a number of lady visitors, after which we could not have been run off with a stick. We sang until the weary hours.

The Alamo would be prominent in a large city, and the scenery environing the town which we beheld from the balconies of our hotel is all that the lover of Nature could desire.

We also accepted Mr. Snyder's invitation for a drive along the sides of the sloping hills, where the scenery is ever changing, never the same, and always preserving the pleasant lights and shades that render a location desirable. A description of the rising hills, the foliage of the large green trees sending their sylvan shades over half an acre; the silvery lakes of water, and the beautiful fields of waving grain below, appear fabulous in print, to the eastern reader. But what would appear more fabulous is stern reality, the actual average production of this valley in figures, as follows: Wheat, 45 to 60 bushels per acre; barley, 40 to 60 bushels per acre, (one acre pointed out that yielded 112 bushels.)

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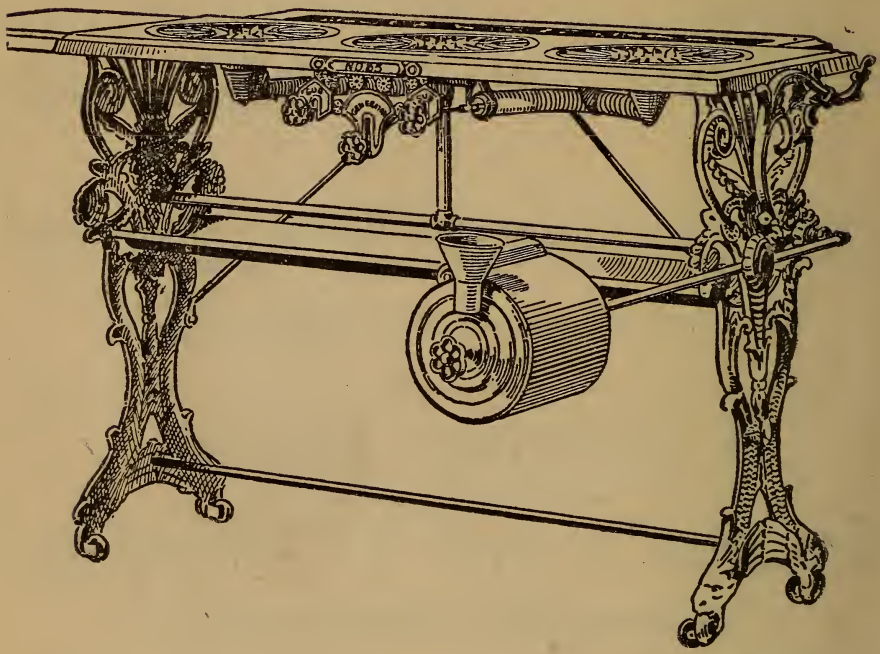

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